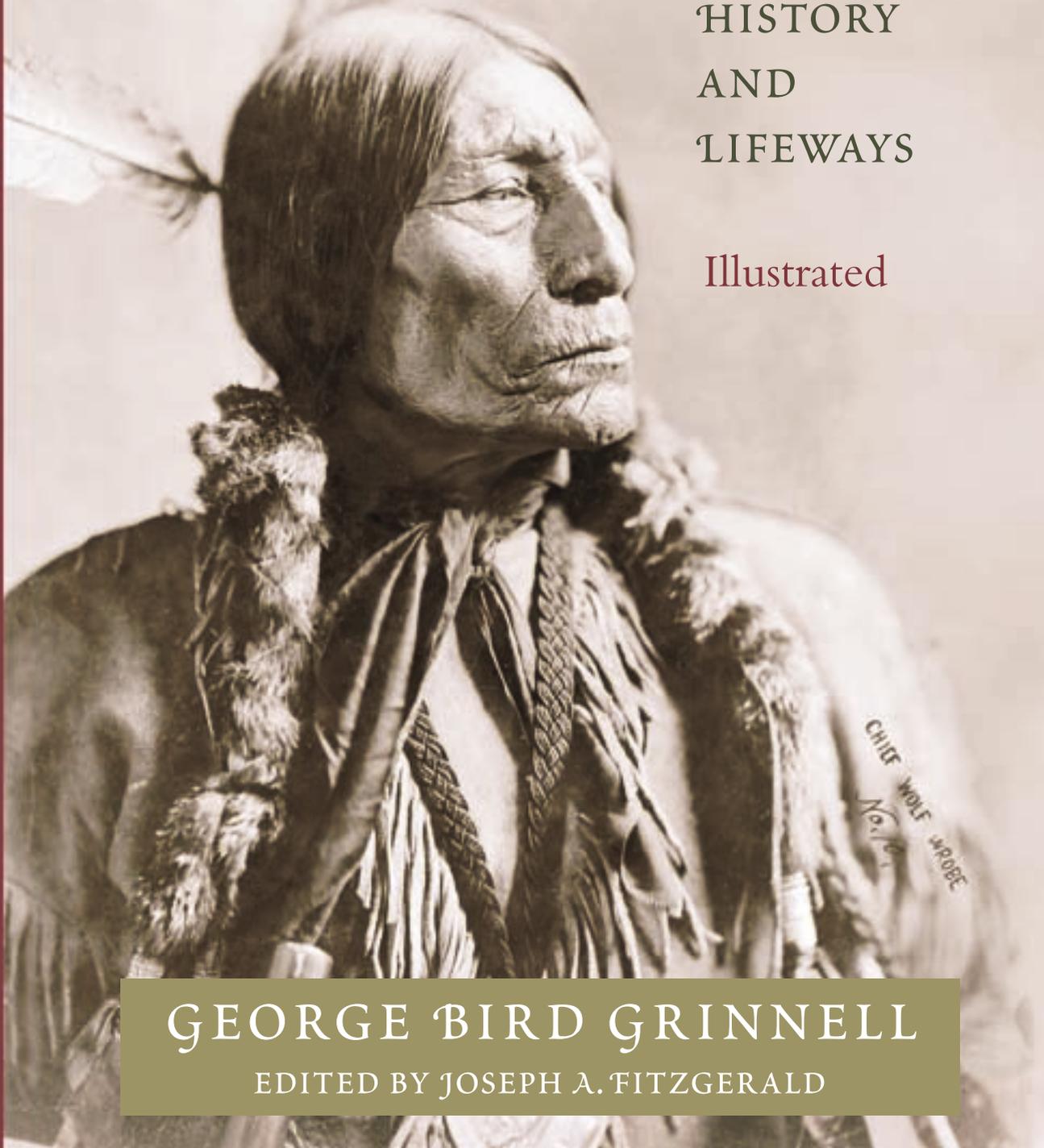


THE CHEYENNE INDIANS



THEIR
HISTORY
AND
LIFEWAYS

Illustrated



GEORGE BIRD GRINNELL

EDITED BY JOSEPH A. FITZGERALD

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Unknown Cheyenne warriors





THE CHEYENNE INDIANS

THEIR HISTORY AND LIFEWAYS

EDITED AND ILLUSTRATED



GEORGE BIRD GRINNELL

ABRIDGED & ADAPTED BY

JOSEPH A. FITZGERALD



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The Cheyenne Indians: Their History and Lifeways
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Touch The Clouds

✦ PREFACE ✦

WE are fortunate that the old-time ways of the Cheyennes live on in the writings of George Bird Grinnell (1849-1938), who lived with, studied, and befriended the last generation of their tribe to have known the glorious freedom of the buffalo days.

Grinnell's exposure to the nomadic lifeways of the Plains Indians started in 1870, but his close association with the Cheyennes began in 1890, shortly after their confinement to a Northern and Southern Reservation; it was a mutual bond that continued thereafter for more than forty years. Nearly each summer, often for months at a time, he would camp among Cheyenne lodges, during which time he was privileged to share in almost every phase and event of their life. They called him "Wikis," or "Bird," for each year he would come and go with the seasons, just as many winged creatures do.

Similar in spirit to the well-known undertaking of his younger contemporary, the photographer and writer Edward S. Curtis, Grinnell's aim was to record for posterity what remained or was remembered of the former way of life of the Cheyennes.¹ The results of Grinnell's close to half-century long enterprise of observation and inquiry are of great—one can rightly say, irreplaceable—historic and intrinsic value. The present volume, an edited rendering² of his *magnum opus* on the Cheyenne tribe, offers the reader a textured and extraordinarily vivid picture of the ordinary life of their nomadic past. "So extensive," according to Dee Brown's³ view, "are details of dress, courtship, the place of women in the tribe, implements of war, hunting methods, games and amusements, religion, accounts of battles, [Grinnell's writings] have long been favorite source books for everyone interested in Plains Indians."⁴

When Grinnell reports what Elk River knew of old-time agriculture, how Porcupine described his doctoring of patients, how Coal Bear exercised his function as keeper of the Sacred Hat, and why Brave Wolf became a Contrary, he is talking about men who were his old friends. They were bound together by a shared love of the days when the vast buffalo herds roamed the unploughed, unfenced Plains, days which haunted their memory. It is this intimate connection⁵ between Grinnell and the people he studied that allows his writings to convey, beyond mere facts of their life, a feeling and a taste of what their life was like. It may also help to explain why, in the opinion of Mari Sandoz,⁶ Grinnell's work on the Cheyenne is "the finest body of material on any American tribe."

¹ Grinnell, who traveled and worked with Curtis, once stated: "For some years an American artist [Curtis] has been studying the Indians with a camera, and he has put into this labor an amount of time, energy, and self-sacrifice which shows the work to be the love of his life, while the results attained show that it is a worthy love" (From "Portraits of Indian Types," *Scribner's Magazine*, Vol. XXXVII, No. 3, March 1905, p. 270). Although the goals of the two men were similar, their approaches varied. Grinnell, for example, appears never to have requested, as Curtis did at times, a "staged" physical recreation of an action or event.

² The original two-volume work is over eight hundred pages in length. Editorial changes made in the present edition include the deletion and re-ordering of many passages and the addition or modification of the titling of certain chapters and sections. In order to facilitate readability, we have not noted deletions or alterations within the text. In addition, a handful of words have been added for clarification or in order to weave shifted passages into the flow of the text. The present edition also includes selections from three articles previously unpublished in book form.

³ The historian and novelist, and famed author of *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West*.

⁴ Introduction to *Pawnee, Blackfoot, and Cheyenne: History and Folklore of the Plains from the Writings of George Bird Grinnell*, edited by Dee Brown (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961), p. xii.

⁵ Evidence of this intimacy can be seen from the experience of Stanley Vestal, who found "that a letter from Grinnell opened every door" (from the Introduction to *The Fighting Cheyennes* [Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1955]).

⁶ The historian and novelist, and renowned author of *Crazy Horse: The Strange Man of the Oglalas*.

Preface

That Grinnell speaks of a bygone era must not obscure the fact that the Cheyennes are a *living* people with a culture that has adapted to their present circumstances. They remain nevertheless, consciously and almost defiantly so, informed and enriched by their past,⁷ which gives us one more reason to attempt to understand the Cheyennes as they were when George Bird Grinnell first sat about their fires, “joining with eye, ear, and voice in the conversation that passes between those who form the circle.”⁸

Joseph A. Fitzgerald



Elk River and wife; Elk River was Grinnell's close friend

⁷ Peter L. Powell's monograph, *Sweet Medicine: The Continuing Role of the Sacred Arrow, the Sun Dance, and the Sacred Buffalo Hat in Northern Cheyenne History* (Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma, 1969), is indicative, already by its title, of this cultural continuity. Powell's work includes a story that highlights a more contemporary cultural function of Grinnell's historical writings: “The ceremonies [of the unwrapping of the Sacred Buffalo Hat bundle] began with Father Powell reading from George Bird Grinnell's ‘Great Mysteries of the Cheyenne,’ an article written in 1910, when Wounded Eye was Keeper. Last Bull said, ‘Listen. This may be the first time we ever hear the rules that have been written way back when Coal Bear was Keeper.... I say we accept it.’”

“Father Powell began reading, with Stands in Timber and Woodenlegs translating his words into Cheyenne as he read.... Then Father Powell stated that there was more to the article, but that it could be read later, rather than on such a sacred occasion. Fred Last Bull said, ‘It's good.... It should be read to Little Coyote [keeper of the sacred hat]. It is what he needs.’”

⁸ George Bird Grinnell, *The Indians of To-day* (New York: Duffield & Company, 1915), p. 34.

✦ INTRODUCTION ✦

MY first meeting with the Cheyenne Indians was hostile,¹ and after that, though often in the country of the Cheyennes, I never knew them until their wars were over. My first visit to their camp was in 1890 when, at the invitation of my old schoolmate and friend, Lieut. Edward W. Casey, 22nd Infantry, who had enlisted a troop of Cheyenne scouts, I visited him at Fort Keogh and made their acquaintance. Lieutenant Casey was killed in January, 1891, and his scouts were disbanded a little later. From that time on, no year has passed without my seeing the Cheyennes in the North or in the South, or in both camps. I have been fortunate enough to have had, as interpreters in the North, William Rowland, who married into the tribe in the year 1850, and later his sons, James and Willis. In the South, Ben Clark helped me; and until his death in 1918 George Bent, an educated half-breed born at Bent's Old Fort in 1843, who lived his life with his people, was my friend and assistant. He was the son of Owl Woman and Col. William Bent, a man of excellent intelligence and of extraordinary memory.

After a few years' acquaintance, the Indians began to give me their confidence, and I have been able to some extent to penetrate into the secrets of their life. On the other hand, I am constantly impressed by the number of things about the Indians that I do not know. In describing the life, the ways, and the beliefs of the Cheyennes, I have gone into details which may sometimes appear superfluous; but after all, if one is to understand their viewpoint, this seems necessary. The Cheyennes in certain ways live more in accordance with custom and form than we do, and a comprehension of the motives which govern their acts cannot be had without these details.

I have never been able to regard the Indian as a mere object for study—a museum specimen. A half-century spent in rubbing shoulders with them, during which I have had a share in almost every phase of their old-time life, forbids me to think of them except as acquaintances, comrades, and friends. While their culture differs from ours in some respects, fundamentally they are like ourselves,² except in so far as their environment has obliged them to adopt a mode of life and of reasoning that is not quite our own, and which, without experience, we do not readily understand.

It is impossible for me to acknowledge all the kindness that I have received during my long association with the Cheyennes. My Indian friends have always been cordial and helpful. To my interpreters, Ben Clark, George Bent, William Rowland and his sons, as well as to Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Eddy and to Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Stohr, I owe much. The illustrations shown are a few of the many photographs taken by Mrs. Grinnell and by Mrs. J. E. Tuell, who have kindly permitted their use. They picture some of the old-time practices and ceremonies, never to be seen again.³ Rev. Rodolphe Petter has been most generously helpful to me on the linguistic side; and finally, my friend, Frederick W. Hodge, so well equipped with general knowledge of American Indians, and the first living authority on the Indians and the history of the southwest United States, has performed for me the great service of reading over my manuscript. George E. Hyde has helped me with the index. To all these persons, past and present, my thanks are due.

George Bird Grinnell
New York, August, 1923

¹ Editor's Note: Grinnell first crossed the Missouri in 1870 as a member of Professor O. C. Marsh's geological expedition of the Black Hills. On the day they reached Fort McPherson, they learned that earlier the same day a small party of Indians had attacked two or three hunters who had come from the fort. Grinnell accompanied the detachment of soldiers sent to pursue the Indians. Guided by William F. ("Buffalo Bill") Cody, they found only the body of a young man shot and killed by one of the hunters. Based on his clothes, they identified him as a Cheyenne.

² Editor's Note: Elsewhere Grinnell has written of the Indians that "too often they have been studied merely as natural-history specimens, and described wholly from the outside. Their humanity has been forgotten" ("Portraits of Indian Types," *Scribner's Magazine*, Vol. XXXVII, No. 3, March 1905, p. 270).

³ Editor's Note: The majority of these photographs appear in the present edition, along with numerous new illustrations.



Wife of Old Crow

MYTHICAL AND HISTORICAL ORIGINS

THE Cheyenne creation story speaks of a person floating on the water which then covered the whole earth. All about him were swans, geese, ducks, and other water birds. These had already been created, and of their origin nothing is said. The person called some of these birds and directed them to look for some earth. One after another the birds dived into the water to try to reach the bottom and find earth; but none was successful until at length a small blue duck¹ that had dived came to the surface with a little mud in its bill. This duck swam to the man, who took the mud from it and worked the wet earth with his fingers until he had made it dry. Then he put little piles of the earth on the water at different places near him, and these became land which spread out and grew and grew until, as far as could be seen, all was solid land. Thus was created the dry land—the earth.²

After the earth had been made, a man and a woman were created and placed upon it. When the creator, *Heammarwihio*, made the man, he formed him from a rib taken from his own right side; and then from the left side of the man he took a rib, from which he created the woman. These two persons were made at the same place; but after they had been created, they were put apart, the woman being placed in the North, and the man in the South. The creator said to them that where he had placed the woman it would be for the most part cold, and the animals and birds where she was would be different from those found where the man was; but that in summer the birds living in the South would go north. The woman in the North, though she had gray hair, was not old, and never grew older. The man in the South was young, and he grew no older. The woman controls Hoimaha, commonly

spoken of as the Winter Man, or the storm, the power that brings cold and snow, and also sickness and death. The man in the South, who probably represents the sun, controls the Thunder.

There is conflict between Hoimaha and the Thunder; and the Thunder furnished to the culture hero fire as a weapon to use against cold and storm. Twice a year there is a struggle between the Thunder and the Winter Man—the changes of the seasons. At the end of summer, Hoimaha comes down from the north and drives the Thunder back to the south; but toward spring, when the days begin to grow longer, the Thunder returns from the south and forces the Winter Man back to his place. When the Thunder comes up from the south, he brings with him the rain and the warm weather, and the grass grows and the earth becomes green.

HISTORICAL ORIGINS

The Cheyennes are one of the westernmost tribes of the great Algonquian family. They formerly lived far to the east of their present range, in fixed villages and cultivated the soil; but moving west and southwest, becoming separated from their kindred of the East, they at last thrust out into the plains beyond the Missouri, and secured horses. In later days they were a typical Plains tribe of buffalo hunters, possessing energy and courage, and taking rank as one of the most hardy and forceful tribes of the great central plains.

The Cheyennes today are settled in two divisions: the Northern Cheyennes in Montana, where in 1921 they numbered 1,411 individuals, and the Southern Cheyennes in Oklahoma, numbering in the same year 1,870, giving a total for the tribe of 3,281 persons.³ The arbitrary and modern division into Northern and Southern sections means nothing more than that a part of the tribe elected to reside in one region, and a part in another. The separation began about 1830. At first the movement was slow, but the building of Bent's Fort in Colorado in 1832 hastened it. Constant

¹ The bird here called duck is described as the coot or mud-hen, *Fulica*, and the identification is made certain by frequent references to the white spot at the base of the bill.

² This story resembles other Algonquian genesis myths, but the introduction of the duck suggests an element found in the Arikara creation story.

³ Editor's Note: Today both Northern and Southern divisions of the Cheyennes number approximately 7,000 persons, for a total population of 14,000.

intercourse has always been carried on between the two divisions, and they regard themselves merely as two different camps of the tribe. Until the white occupancy of the plains made this impossible, Northerners moved south from time to time and remained there, and Southerners moved north. Often members of the same family lived, some in the North and others in the South. Frequent visiting still goes on by way of the railroads, and there are still changes of location by individuals or families.

The Cheyenne tribe is made up of the descendants of two related tribes, the *Tsis tsis' tās*, or Cheyenne proper, and the *Sub' tai*, who are said to have joined the Cheyennes after they crossed the Missouri and perhaps not much more than two hundred years ago, or in the early part of the eighteenth century.

For years during our first knowledge of the tribe, the name Cheyenne was supposed to be derived from the French word *chien*, "dog," and this appeared to receive confirmation from the fact that an important soldier society of the tribe was called Dog Soldiers. The tribal name is now known to be an abbreviation of the Sioux terms *Shā hī' yē na*, or *Sha hī' ē la*, "red talkers," meaning "people of alien speech"—those who talk a language which is not intelligible. The Sioux speak of people whose language they understand as "white talkers," and of those whose language is not understood as "red talkers."⁴ Among several Plains tribes the name for the Cheyennes is a variant of the Sioux name, as for example, when the Arikaras and the Pawnees call the Cheyennes *Shar' ha*.

The tribe does not use the name which we have given them. They call themselves *Tsistsistas*, which the books commonly give as meaning "people." It probably means related to one another, similarly bred, like us, our people, or us. The Rev. Rodolphe Petter has pointed out that it may be translated "cut people," "gashed people," for the two words are nearly alike. This last meaning is practically that given them on the prairie in early times by whites and Indians alike, and evidently comes from the distant sign which they used to designate themselves, which means "cut arms." If one is speaking by signs to a Cheyenne close

at hand and asks his tribe, he will make on the back of the left forward-directed forefinger two or three diagonal cross lines drawn toward his body with the right forefinger. It has been said that the terms "gashed or cut people," and "cut arms," were applied to them from their old practice of cutting strips of skin from their arms and other parts of the body to offer in sacrifice, to bring good fortune.

The early history of the Cheyennes, like that of all of their neighbors, is vague. Their movements may be traced back for more than two hundred years, but beyond that the investigator comes to a point beyond which all is conjecture. From their own traditions and from the fact that they are of the western Algonquians, whose current of migration was in a general westerly and southwesterly course, we may conclude that the Cheyennes came from the Northeast or East, but whether they reached the upper drainage of the Mississippi River along the southern shores of the Great Lakes, or along the northern shores and around the west end of Lake Superior, it would seem now impossible to learn.

Previous to the year 1880, certain Cheyenne traditions bearing on the earliest tribal wanderings were gathered at Fort Reno, Oklahoma, from a number of the oldest Southern Cheyennes, by the late Ben Clark, and the country described in these accounts as the primitive home of the Cheyennes seems to suggest the region lying north of the Great Lakes and toward Hudson Bay, rather than that south of the lakes.

The Northern Cheyennes tell of having lived for a long time on the border of some great water, the winter home of multitudes of migrating wild fowl. Each autumn these birds passed over them in great flocks and alighted in this water, where they spent the winter, and when spring came and the first thunders were heard, the wild fowl rose and flew over them and away, to disappear in the North. The climate of this country must have been mild, because, at that time, it is said, the people wore no clothing.

From this great water they started on their journey toward the West. They tell of moving from some distant land by boats, which they cannot describe. They were poorly equipped with weapons, and were unable to capture large animals, except occasionally in snares. Their flesh food consisted largely of small animals—skunks are particularly mentioned—and the water fowl which bred in the lakes found everywhere in that region. When the birds came in spring and built their nests, the people gathered great quan-

⁴ The interpretation of the word Cheyenne is probably as given, yet today many of the Sioux declare that the term was applied to the Cheyennes because when the Sioux first met them, the Cheyennes were painted red over the whole body and their clothing was painted red. The same thing is said of the Crees, who in early days also painted the whole body red.

tities of eggs for food, and when the old birds shed their flight feathers many were captured, and when the young were partly grown these were killed. Thus so long as the fowl remained they subsisted chiefly on them.

Their movement from the Northeast brought them to the edge of some large body of water which it became necessary to cross. The distance between shores was great, and landmarks could not be distinguished, or perhaps wild rice, rushes, or other growths were so high above the water as to obstruct the view; at all events it was needful to learn what course was to be followed. Young men were sent forward to discover what lay beyond this water, and in order to mark the route followed they placed in their canoes poles, which, as they advanced, they thrust into the mud of the bottom and left standing. They reached the other shore and found themselves in a flat country, which seemed to be flooded, for as they went forward in their canoes trees stood all about them in the water. At length they turned about, and following the sticks standing in the water, readily found the way back to their people. When the whole tribe advanced, the marked way was again followed.

Where this was we do not know, nor where the Cheyennes went from here. They speak next of a very flat country in which grew a tall red grass which they gathered and tied in bundles to use for fuel, for in that land there was little or no wood. Up to this time they are believed to have lived in shelters made by setting poles in the ground in a circle or oval, bending them over toward a common center to form a roof, and building up the sides with grass, earth, and sods; in other words, in permanent earth lodges.

It is told by the Cheyennes of today that soon after they reached the flat country of their tradition, they were attacked by the Hohe, or Assiniboines, and perhaps by the Crees. These possessed firearms—guns presumably obtained from the Hudson Bay Company or from still earlier traders on Hudson Bay. These attacks of the Hohe drove their tribe in a southwesterly direction until they reached the Missouri.

The Cheyennes now came into touch with two tribes of the Missouri, the Mandans and Arikaras. Mandan tradition given to Maximilian⁵ tells us that they were attacked by the Cheyennes soon after that

tribe arrived on the Missouri, and that a war ensued;⁶ but peace was at length made, and for a long time the two tribes were on terms of close friendship. This tradition of war between the Cheyennes and Mandans I do not trust. No present-day Indians have ever heard of it, though stories are often told of fights with the Arikaras. In these friendly relations the Arikaras also were usually included, and the oldest Cheyennes of the last generation—1890-1900—often spoke of the time when the two tribes lived together at the mouth of the Moreau or Owl River; the Arikaras lived farther down, near the Cheyenne River.⁷

After the Cheyennes had crossed the Missouri River and a part had worked their way out on the plains to or near the Black Hills, they met with a numerous company, the Suhtai, who spoke a dialect of the Cheyenne language—rougher, harsher, and more guttural. Cheyenne tradition says that long, long ago, very far back, long before they began their westward migration, the Suhtai had been their enemies. They used to fight with them, but at last the two tribes discovered that they spoke the same tongue, and so were related. When this was learned they became friends and made an alliance. Later, still in the North, they separated and for a long time did not meet. Some informants have been told that the two tribes came together and separated three times. When the Suhtai joined the Cheyennes in the Black Hills country they were at once recognized by their speech, which was so similar to the Cheyenne tongue that it could be understood, though many words differed from those used by the Cheyennes.

The meaning of the name Suhtai is not known nor is anything known of them before they reached the plains. It is known that for many years after crossing the Missouri River, the Suhtai lived near and in association with the Cheyennes.⁸ Yet they retained their tribal organization and spoke their own dialect as late as the year 1832, when William Bent, going north from the recently completed fort on the Arkansas to find the Cheyennes, came upon the Suhtai camp, and

⁶ Maximilian, *Travels*, vol. II, p. 369 et seq. (Paris, 1841).

⁷ Renaudiere found the "Rickaras" on the Missouri, ten leagues above the Mahas in 1723 (Margry, VI, p. 392); just below Cheyenne River, Lewis and Clark (Orig. Journ., vol. I, p. 176) passed a Ree village which may have been abandoned about 1750, and another near Owl River perhaps abandoned about 1796.

⁸ Ben Clark, MS., circa 1880.

⁵ Editor's Note: In 1832 Prince Alexander Philipp Maximilian made one of the earliest explorations of the American West, accompanied by the Swiss-born artist Karl Bodmer.

by them was told where to look for the Cheyennes. Bent, who spoke Cheyenne, declared that he had difficulty in understanding the speech of the Suhtai. Not very long after this, the Suhtai appear to have joined Cheyennes permanently and to have become a part of the tribe, regularly camping and living with them. When this took place the old Suhtai dialect began to be lost. Though it was spoken by the old people, the children who were born and reared in the Cheyenne camp naturally spoke the dialect of their fellows, and today few old men or women remain who recall any of the old Suhtai who spoke that dialect. At the present day the Suhtai remain among the Cheyennes merely as the name of a division.

The old-time beliefs and ways⁹ were more enduring, and a multitude of customs of the Suhtai, handed down to their children, are practiced in the tribe today. One of the important mysteries of the Cheyennes is the so-called buffalo hat, *Īs' sī wūn*, which it is believed was brought to the Suhtai by that tribe's culture hero.

Even after the Cheyennes had reached the Missouri River, while some of them stopped there, others still seemed disposed to roam. Information from different men—one of whom himself remembered a time when some Cheyenne still lived on the Missouri River—shows that after they had come to that stream and settled there to cultivate their crops and live their lives, there was a tendency among some of the more restless people to go farther, to work out on the plains, where buffalo were abundant. A part remained in different camps on the Missouri River, sedentary, and occupying permanent houses, and a part began to wander out onto the plains. Elk River (born about 1810) says that one band that remained on



Pawnee earth lodges, c. 1868

the Missouri River moved down below the Standing Rock, and then, changing their minds, moved again and went on farther down, established a new village, there planted their corn and tobacco, and raised crops for many years. (His mother's statement will be given farther on.)

The people who began to wander out on the plains at first merely made hunting journeys, and returned with their meat to the village; but gradually these hunting excursions lasted longer and longer, until a time was reached when they practically lived on the plains and visited the river. Wandering farther and farther, those who had left the Missouri River reached the Black Hills, about which they lived, and which for generations was the center of their wanderings.

The streams running from the Black Hills were pleasant to live on. Food was abundant, and after the Cheyennes had made successful killings of buffalo,

⁹ Short Old Man, one of the last of the Suhtai, could not endure the smell of coffee. He and his wife did not like to ride on horseback, but usually walked and led the horse. Once while crossing the Arkansas River, Short Old Man fell off his horse. He said that the water sweeping under him made him dizzy. Once he was persuaded to go on a buffalo hunt on horseback, but as soon as his horse began to run, he fell off. Short Old Man always smoked "red-willow" bark with his tobacco, and placed a little powdered buffalo-chip on the filling of the pipe. Short Old Man and his wife never wore blankets, but always buffalo robes; in winter with the hair on, and sheets, so called, tanned without hair, in summer. They bathed every morning, winter or summer, cutting a hole in the ice if necessary. After their bath they returned to the lodge and made the fire.



the people, when they visited their relatives on the Missouri River, were accustomed to carry back quantities of dried meat and present it to those who were farming there. The accounts of the visitors, confirmed by the gifts of food which they brought, formed a constantly increasing temptation to those who still lived on the Missouri River; and the ultimate result—though it may have taken generations to bring it about—was that most of the Cheyennes moved out to the plains, but the final exodus probably did not take place until the early part of the nineteenth century.

While the permanent houses of the Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara, and Pawnee endured to very recent times and have been described in many books, those of the Cheyennes are known only from tradition and from the suggestions of early writers; and soon after the beginning of the nineteenth century the greater part of the tribe had probably abandoned permanent houses, had to a great extent lost attachment for cer-

tain particular localities, and had become wanderers, as they continued to be until the end of the Indian wars. Notwithstanding this change of habit, they still cultivated the ground and raised crops.

In the year 1877 Little Chief's band of Cheyennes, while being taken south, was for some time detained at Fort Lincoln, North Dakota, and among them were the mother of old Elk River and part of her family. During their stay at Fort Lincoln, this old woman took her daughter-in-law and granddaughter¹⁰ about to various localities not far from the post, and laughter and tears pointed out to them the well-known places where, as a girl, she had played and worked. She said that at the time of which she then told, her group of Cheyennes lived in a permanent village on the east bank of the Missouri River and planted there. In the large houses of this village, the grandmother said, there

¹⁰ This daughter-in-law and granddaughter I knew well. The granddaughter is living.

were often a considerable number of people—two or three or four families. The small house circles seen in the villages were where menstrual lodges had stood, or those occupied by old women who lived alone, as often they did when they were old, and believed that they had not long to live. Elk River was a Suhtai.

White Bull, a Northern Cheyenne (born 1834), declares that in 1832, when High Backed Wolf, Limber Lance, and Bull Head returned from Washington—the first Cheyenne delegation to visit the seat of government—the Cheyennes were still farming on and near the Missouri. It was soon after the death of High Backed Wolf in 1833 that an increasing number of the Missouri River Cheyennes began to take to a wandering life and some of them to go south.

NATURE AND PATTERNS OF MIGRATION

In their progress through the new western country, the early white travelers found here and there camps of Indians, and heard of other camps which they did not see. Accustomed to the sedentary habits of white people, the explorers seem to have taken it for granted that any place or point occupied by a tribe of Indians was the home of that tribe and that it remained permanently in that tract of country—had always been there, and always would be there. Writers who followed the early travelers shared that belief and copied their statements.

Such permanence of occupancy is not likely ever to have been true of the Plains Indians. The conditions of their lives and the difficulties of obtaining food were such that they were seldom all together. Usually they were scattered out over a wide extent of territory, each little group endeavoring to find some place where enough food to support them could be had.

It is true that certain tribes of Plains Indians which depended largely on agriculture occupied permanent villages and were to some extent sedentary. They made periodical hunting trips, in summer and in winter, which lasted for two or three months, when the tribe returned to its permanent villages. Yet from time to time, through scarcity of food, attacks by enemies, or from unknown causes, these sedentary tribes modified or even entirely changed their ways. In historic times some tribes of Pawnees abandoned their permanent villages, moved away, and built new ones

far from the old. Aged Sioux men—Santees in recent years located at the Standing Rock Indian Reservation—have declared to me that their fathers had told them that, many years before, their people lived in permanent (earth) lodges and that it was not until they had commenced to move out onto the plains and toward the Missouri River that such permanent villages were abandoned and skin tipis exclusively adopted.

In the movement of a group of Indians, a camp or village followed its own ideas as to where it wished to go, and usually did not consider the movements of other camps. There was no contemporaneous tribal migration. The trend of the tribal movement being westward, a group moved on, established itself at a point, and remained there for a time—perhaps for many years, perhaps for a generation or two. Later, some village behind it moved forward, passed the first village and stopped somewhere beyond. The gradual westward progress consisted of a succession of such movements, the tail of the long procession often becoming the head, and the different camps or villages moving on successively and passing each other. Since for all the people the important question was that of subsistence, it is evident that when a place was found especially favorable for the procuring of food, the camp would remain there longer than it would in a place where subsistence was less easily had—would be likely to remain, in fact, until food became difficult to obtain. Thus in the tribal movement westward the rearmost camps of the migrating Cheyennes were constantly moving onward and passing those in advance of them.

In the last of the eighteenth and in the early part of the nineteenth century, camps of the Cheyennes were found over a wide territory extending from west of the Black Hills to the Missouri River on the east, and from the Little Missouri River toward its mouth, south at least as far as the Arkansas River, and perhaps still farther. There is mention of Cheyennes in New Mexico before the beginning of the eighteenth century. Of this tribe, as of others, but—so far as I know—more of this tribe than of most others, it may be said that they were scattered over a very wide area. At all events the trend of tribal movement was westward, and this at last brought the Cheyennes to the Missouri River.



High Backed Wolf (Wolf On The Hill), Cheyenne Chief; painting by George Catlin, 1832



The Battle of the Little Bighorn; painting by Feodor Fuchs, c. 1876

MEETINGS WITH THE SIOUX

Not a few traditions exist among the Cheyennes of the first appearance of Sioux immigrants toward the Black Hills country. One of the early meetings told of was at some point on the plains west of the Missouri River. A party of Cheyennes met a party of Sioux, but each group was suspicious of the other and they did not approach closely, but at a distance talked by signs. From each party, at the request of the other, an arrow was shot over, which, taken back to the home village, should bear witness to the truth of the statements made by each. This comes from White Frog (born 1840), and the story was told by his grandfather, who died before White Frog was born, said to have been one hundred years old—so old, according to the accounts, that for a long time before his death he was too feeble to walk. These Sioux were met, according to the statement, when the grandfather was a young man, about twenty years of age. This would make the date of meeting about 1760.

On another occasion a small party of Sioux, poor and on foot, were discovered by some Cheyennes. There was much discussion as to whether they should be allowed to come into the camp or should be killed, but since they carried a buffalo head, which represented food, it was finally decided to receive them as friends. The Sioux remained with the Cheyennes for some months and when they went away the Cheyennes gave them two colts, for the Cheyennes then had a few horses; not everyone in the camp had a horse, but here and there a man had one or two. The Sioux were not seen again for two or three years. Then they returned to the Cheyenne camp, and with them came a few more Sioux. They stayed for a time and were given more colts.

After that they began to come in greater numbers. They are supposed to have gone back to their village in the East and reported there, "We have found a tribe of people who have animals that they can ride and that carry things on their backs, while we have only dogs and must walk, and ourselves carry our possessions."

This tradition was commonly known by all old Cheyennes twenty years ago, and has been told me by such men as Old Little Chief, Spotted Wolf, Bull Thigh, Iron Shirt, and others, —all men born in the early years of the nineteenth century.

CONTACTS WITH THE 'WHITES

The Cheyenne tradition of their first meeting with the whites is vague as to time and place. The usual account is substantially that given by Clark.¹¹ Once long ago a man in a starving condition wandered into the camp. When they saw him, the people said to one another, "This is one of the persons that Sweet Medicine¹² told us we should meet," for the man had hair all over his face and his skin was white. The Cheyennes took him into a lodge, gave him food and clothing, and nursed him back to health. He remained with them for a long time—so long that he learned to speak their language—and explained that he had been with two or three other men in a boat which had upset and that his companions had been lost. He told them that his home was far off toward the sunrise and that he wished to return to it, but he said, "Some day I will come back and will bring you things that will be useful to you."

The man went away, and one day, a long time afterward, the people heard a noise like thunder—the report of a gun. Everyone went out from the camp in the direction from which the sound came to see what it was, and there they saw, coming, this white man and others with him. He had with him guns, knives, flint-and-steel, needles, and many other things which he gave them in exchange for skins.

With pieces of iron that he brought, he made arrowpoints which they at once saw were better than theirs of stone or bone, so that all who could procure it used the iron for arrowpoints. With these arrows they could kill animals much more easily than with those made of stone. They, therefore, threw away their stone points.

This man who had first come among them remained with the Cheyennes until he became old, and at last he died. Sometimes he made journeys to the east and took back with him in a boat the furs for which he traded. Of the first white men that came among them some, they say, could write, but they did not write on paper, but on a black rock—no doubt slate. Some of the old men have heard that this first white man was a Spaniard. There is no hint as to whence he came, nor of the situation of the camp that he reached.

¹¹ W.P. Clark, *Indian Sign Language*, p. 98.

¹² Editor's Note: See chapter on "The Cultural Heroes."

Another account says that the first Frenchman came to the Cheyennes where they were farming on the Missouri River. Some say that this was at the mouth of the Cheyenne River. This man is said to have carried his property on a sort of low two-wheeled cart, all tied up with rawhide and with solid wheels. The rims of the wheels were wrapped with rawhide. The cart made a loud squeaking or screaming noise, and was hauled by dogs. Long before the man arrived they heard a loud sharp sound, and wondered what it was. When the man reached them they made signs to him, asking what caused this strange noise. He pointed to a long stick—a gun—that he held in his hand, and indicated that this made the noise. They asked him to do it again, and he loaded the gun and fired a shot, and some of the children and women and men thought it was the thunder and fell down on the ground. All were much frightened and ran away. The man remained with them for a time and then went away, saying that he would return. He did come back, but in a boat. They looked down the river and could see the flag and the boat under it, coming very slowly.

Elk River believed that the first white men the Cheyennes saw were the French, *Mai vi' hio*, “red white men.” They were good friends to the Cheyennes. It was from the French that they got their first guns.

Cheyenne tradition, known to all the older men, declares that in early days, probably long before the Cheyennes met the French, wandering Mexicans were accustomed to make frequent journeys north to trade with all the northern Indians, who at that time lived about the Black Hills—Kiowa, Comanche, Cheyenne, Crow, and Arapaho. These Mexicans went as far north as Tongue River and the neighborhood of the Big Horn Mountains. The *ciboleros*, or buffalo hunters, spoken of in books on the early West, were no doubt the last of these. They brought with them for trade, the Cheyennes tell us, a certain dry, hard bread, of which the Indians were very fond, salt, arrowshafts, bows and partly manufactured bows, and sheet iron for arrowpoints. Indeed, many of the oldest men among the Northern Cheyennes believe that it was from these Mexicans that the Cheyennes procured their first metal arrowpoints. The dog-drawn cart before referred to is quite suggestive of a diminutive *carro* of New Mexico in earlier days.

The articles brought by the Mexicans were exchanged for dried meat, parfleches, robes, backrests, moccasins, and various other things, which the

Indians had in abundance. It was from one of these Mexican traders that the so-called “iron shirt”—a coat of mail—was obtained by an Arapaho or a Flathead and finally passed into the possession of the Cheyennes, who retained it until the year 1852, when Alights On The Cloud, who was then wearing it, was killed and the shirt was captured by the Pawnees and destroyed.¹³

Lewis and Clark speak of the French as with the Cheyennes in the Black Hills. John Valle, who wintered on the Chien River, under the Black Mountains,¹⁴ was familiar with the region and described the animals found there and some of the birds. Lewis and Clark hired “a Canadian Frenchman who had been with the Cheyenne Ind. on the Cote Noir last summer descended thence the Little Missouri”—Baptiste Le Page, who took the place of Newman, who had been discharged. Lewis and Clark speak of the Cheyennes as very shy and unwilling to have to do with the whites, and state that one head man, to whom a medal had been given, after a time returned it, being afraid to keep it.

Old men among the Cheyennes have always declared that they have been told that, when the whites first came into their country, the chiefs advised all their people to have nothing to do with the newcomers, but to avoid them, and that usually this instruction had been followed. This may perhaps refer to the prophecy made by the culture hero, *Mot si i u*,¹⁵ who, when he left his people, warned them that only harm would come to them by association with the whites. A few years later, however, the Cheyennes had become somewhat accustomed to seeing white people. Accounts of the wars between Cheyennes and the whites have been given in an earlier volume.¹⁶



¹³ *The Fighting Cheyennes* (N. Y., 1915), p. 75.

¹⁴ Lewis and Clark, *Orig. Journ.*, vol. I, p. 176.

¹⁵ Editor's Note: See chapter on “The Cultural Heroes.”

¹⁶ *The Fighting Cheyennes*.

THE CULTURAL HEROES

MANY of the Cheyenne mythical tales closely resemble those of other Western Algonquians, especially those of the Blackfeet; and Cheyenne men to whom some of these Blackfeet stories—especially those about Napi—have been read, say, “Why, those are our own stories with the names changed a little.”

It may be said, however, that of the tales found among the Cheyennes, the stories of the culture hero are the most important.¹ Since the Cheyennes, as before stated, are made up of two related tribes—Suhtai and Tsistsistas—they have two culture heroes and two mysterious objects which these personages brought into the tribe. These two objects—the medicine arrows (*Mahuts*) and the buffalo hat (*Issiwun*)—are equally revered by all members of the tribe, no matter what their descent.

CULTURAL HEROES BRING CORN AND THE BUFFALO

The myths which deal with the coming of the buffalo and the bringing of corn to the people relate that these things were brought by two similarly dressed young men, one of whom was the Suhtai and the other the Cheyenne culture hero.² The name given for the Cheyenne culture hero is commonly Sweet Medicine, Sweet Root Standing, or Rustling Corn Leaf; while the Suhtai culture hero is known as Red Tassel (of corn), Erect Horns, or Standing On The Ground. These men met for the first time not long before they, together, brought to the people these good things. In the account here given paragraphs are taken from different versions of the tale to make a connected story.

¹ See also *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, vol. XX, pp. 169-194, July-September, 1907, and vol. XXI, pp. 269-320, October-December, 1908.

² Apparently earlier than the culture-hero story is that of *Ehyophstab*, Yellow-haired Woman, through whose influence the buffalo were first brought to the people. After a time, however, Yellow-haired Woman disobeyed the instructions of her father, and for this reason the buffalo disappeared and were not seen again. Apparently they had been forgotten, and the Cheyennes, who were in some northern country where there were many lakes, depended for their flesh-food on wild fowl and small animals.

In the center of the great camp many people were gathered. Two men were playing the wheel game and others were looking on and betting on the game. From different sides of the camp, two young men approached the group of people and stood watching the game. Presently each saw the other, and saw that he was dressed and painted precisely like himself. For some time they watched each other, and at last walked toward each other, and one said to the other: “Friend, you seem to be imitating me. Are you trying to mock me?” The other replied, “That is just what I was thinking about you; I thought you were making fun of my dress.”

“Where did you get your dress?” said one.

“Where did you learn yours?” replied the other.

The man addressed pointed to a great white bluff that could be seen far off, and said, “I learned it in that big hill over there, where there is an overhanging cliff and a stream of water pouring out.”

“Why,” said the other, “that is where I got mine; the very place you tell of.”

Both young men were astonished. One said: “Well, we will let the people know. Let us go together to that place and try to do something for the people—to bring them something that will help them. We are drawing near to that hill and, when the camp reaches it, we will ask an old man to cry out to the people that we are going in there. They can look at us and see us go in.”

They went to the old man and told him what they purposed to do, and said to him, “The second camp from here, when we are so close to the butte that a man at its foot can be easily seen, tell the people that my friend and I are going in there to get something.”

When the camp had been made near the butte, two lodges were pitched in the center of the circle and white sage was spread on the floor of each. The people all followed the two young men toward the butte; but when they had come near it, all stopped, except these two who went on.

When they were near the bluff, the two stopped and put their robes on the ground, and walked to the place where the water fell from the cliff. Each one wished the other to go in first, but at last they went in together, side by side, and the people saw them disappear under the water.

When the first man came up under the spring, he saw sitting beneath the hill a very old woman. As he stepped in, she said to him, “Come in, my grandchild,” and took him in her arms and held him for a

Background



Bear Butte, a sacred mountain of the Cheyenne

moment, and made him sit down at her left. To the other she said, "Come in, my grandchild," and took him in her arms and held him, and made him sit at her right side. She said to them: "Why did you not come sooner? Why have you gone hungry so long? Now that you have come, I must do something for your people."

Near her stood two earthen jars which she brought out and set before her, and filled two dishes, one with buffalo meat and one with corn. She offered these to the young men, saying, "Come, my children, eat the meat first." They ate it fast, for it was good; but when they had eaten all they could, the dish was still full. It was the same with the cooked corn; they could not empty the dishes. They were full when the young men stopped, and did not show that anything had been taken from them.

The old woman untied the feathers the young men had on their heads, and threw them in the fire. She painted each man with red paint, and on each one painted the sun and the moon, in yellow. Then she stretched her hand out over the fire; and when she took it away, she held two down-feathers painted red, and tied one to the scalp-lock of each young man.

Presently she pointed to her left and said, "Look that way!" They looked, and saw the earth covered with buffalo. The dust was flying up in clouds where the bulls were fighting. Then she pointed partly be-

hind her, and said, "Look this way!" and they saw great fields of growing corn. She pointed again, to her right and said, "Look that way!" and they saw the prairies covered with horses.³ The stallions were fighting, and there was much movement. Again she pointed, and said, "Look that way again!" and as they looked they saw Indians fighting and, looking closely, they saw among the fighters themselves, painted just as they then were. The old woman said to them: "You will always be victorious in your fights; you will have good luck and will make many captives. When you go away from here, go to the center of your village, ask for two big bowls, and have them wiped out clean. Say to your people: 'Women and children and all bands of the societies, we have come out to make you happy. We have brought out something wonderful to give you.' Say to your people that when the sun goes down, I will send out buffalo." To each young man she gave some corn and some meat, and told them to carry the corn in one hand and the meat in the other, and to go back to their people. Before they left, the old woman told them that the oldest men and women were to eat first. Then the two young men went out from under the water.

³ The reference to horses is of course a comparatively recent interpolation, as horses were not acquired until after the coming of white people.

One version says that she gave the meat to Sweet Medicine, and told him that the buffalo would follow him out of the hill; and that she gave the corn to Standing On The Ground, saying that his people should always have it among them.

When the people saw them coming, they sat down in order, waiting for them. The men sat in front, and behind them the women, and then the children. Standing On The Ground first passed along the lines with the bowl of corn, and Sweet Medicine followed with the meat. As they passed along, each person took the left hand full of corn and the right hand full of meat; and all ate. But although so many people ate, the food in the bowls did not diminish. At last, when all had been fed, that which remained in the dishes was put before an old man and an old woman, and they consumed it all. After they had finished eating, Standing On The Ground stepped out before the line, and said: "This is what my grandmother told me. She said that we must take care of the corn and not give it away. If we take care of it and plant it and always look after it, there will always be something for us to eat." He told them what the old woman had explained about planting the corn in the spring of the year; and when he had finished speaking, he stepped to one side. Then Sweet Medicine stood up, and said: "Our grandmother will make for us plenty of what you have eaten [meaning the flesh of all sorts of animals]. When you eat these animals you will be healthy; there will be no sickness among you."

Standing On The Ground said: "The reason I gave the old man the corn last is that when the corn has grown ripe it will turn white, and old men have white hair. The men shall plant and cultivate the corn."

Sweet Medicine said, "The reason I gave the meat to the old woman is that the women shall take care of the skins and flesh of the animals, shall cut up the meat, and tan the hides."

The two young men called out and chose two boys whom they sent to the top of a hill to watch to see whether they could see buffalo. That night the buffalo began to come out of the hill—so many that they frightened all the people in the camp and spread over the whole country. In the morning these young men came back and said that the buffalo were all over the land and close about the camp. Then people went out and killed buffalo and brought in the meat; and as the buffalo moved away, the people moved their camp and followed them. In the spring they moved to a good place to plant corn, and planted it for four

years; but in the fifth year the Arikaras came to the camp while the Cheyennes were off hunting, and stole the corn.

After that, Standing On The Ground went back to Old Woman's Water, and went in to see the old woman; and she gave him the sacred hat which he brought to the camp, and about the care of which he advised the people. It was while Standing On The Ground was instructing the young man he had chosen to care for the hat, that someone came into the lodge with a bad cough; and Standing On The Ground told the young man that this was something that could not be avoided. Disease goes everywhere. The sick man said, "You speak the truth; I have many sorts of diseases, and I carry them to everyone."

About Sweet Medicine, the Cheyenne culture hero, there are many stories. He brought the medicine arrows to the Cheyennes, as Standing On The Ground brought the buffalo hat to the Suhtai. Some of the stories say that these two heroes were in the sacred lodge of the *maiyun* (the mysterious ones, the spirits) at the same time, and received then the two mysteries which they afterward took to their people. Some of the tales even say that, at this same time, their mysteries were received by the culture heroes of the Sioux and of the Arapahoes.

The spirits which taught Standing On The Ground and Sweet Medicine the secrets of these tribal mysteries are of two classes—the Listeners Above, *Hea'mma mäiyün' tsiä' stomüni*, and the Listeners Under The Ground, *Astu'no mäiyün' tsiä' stomüni*. Those who actually gave the instructions are said to have been the Listeners Under The Ground, who appear to be somewhat more powerful than the Listeners Above. These last are helpers, still with us on the earth, who watch us and see what we are doing, and help us to carry out the instructions of the Listeners Under The Ground.

Sweet Medicine is the culture hero best known among the Cheyennes, and the longest and most detailed stories are told about him. To him is credited the establishment of four of the soldier bands, the other three of which had a later origin. Sweet Medicine instituted also the *Massaum* or Crazy Dance, and brought the medicine arrows. Standing On The Ground established the Medicine Lodge or Sun Dance.









Preparing buffalo hides, unknown Cheyennes
Preceding pages: Lakota camp, Piñon Ridge Reservation, South Dakota

VILLAGE LIFE: INCIDENTS OF THE DAY

IF in imagination we can carry ourselves back sixty or seventy years,¹ to the time when the Indians wandered free and before their lives had been greatly modified by the influence of civilization, we may picture some of the features of the daily life of the Cheyennes in the days of the buffalo.

The camp was pitched in a broad bottom, and the lodges stood in a great circle whose diameter was half a mile or more—three arrow flights from a strong bow, and as far as a man can throw an arrow by hand. It was summer, and most of the women had renewed their lodges, so that they stood white in the dim light of the early morning. The sun had not yet risen, but already the fires were kindled, and from the lodges gray columns of smoke were rising through the still air. From all quarters of the camp women were hurrying down to the stream, or coming from it, carrying to the lodges water for the morning use; for the Cheyennes did not use water that had stood all night—they called it dead, and said that they wished to drink living water. As the light grew stronger, men and boys—some of them little fellows just able to walk—came from the lodges and hurried down to the stream, to plunge into it; for the early morning bath was a regular practice. This was done by all at most seasons of the year; but some of them omitted the bath in winter when the streams were frozen, while others broke the ice and bathed in the cold water. This was for good health, to make them hardy, and also to wash away all sickness. The custom was peculiar to the men; women did not do it.

The rising sun looked down upon a camp full of moving people. The women were cooking the meals, the men and boys were returning to the lodges. The pot was removed from the fire, and with a sharpened stick the meat taken from it and put in wooden bowls, or in dishes made of buffalo-horn. Before eating, most of the boys rode out into the hills, and drove in the herds of horses, from which certain ones were selected to be

tied in front of the lodges, to be at hand for any use, while those—usually the most valuable ones—which during the night had been tethered there, were turned loose and taken to the hills to graze, under the charge of a son or a nephew of the lodge, or perhaps of some poor orphan who lived there, receiving his food and clothing and in return performing the various small services that all boys were expected to render to older persons.

The morning meal ended, many of the men saddled their horses and started out to hunt; but before this the voice of the old crier was heard, shouting out to the camp the commands of the chiefs, the order of the day, or perhaps only some items of personal news. He commenced at the opening of the circle, which always faced the rising sun, and riding around, within but close to the lodges, first to the south, then to the west, then to the north, and so back to the east again, called out the news, repeating his announcement at frequent intervals. Perhaps it was that the camp was to remain in this place for one, two, or three days; perhaps that men were not to disturb the buffalo; perhaps that some soldier band was to have a dance that night; or merely that some warrior or chief had lost a piece of property, and people were notified of its ownership. At first the crier's voice came to the distant lodges merely as a faint, droning shout, without words, but it told the people that he was coming, and as he drew nearer, they began to listen, to distinguish what he was saying. A woman, eager for news, stepped out of her lodge to hear the better, and exchanged with some interested neighbor comments on the announcement.

Now, some woman who was making a new lodge carried out and spread on the ground the dressed skins to be used in its construction. Before day came, she had sent a messenger to call her friends to come and help her sew it, and the lodge cutter was already standing over the skins, preparing them for the sewing. The women who were to help in the work, some of them carrying their bundles of sinew thread, began to arrive from various quarters of the camp. Many hands made light work, and before night the sewing of the lodge was completed.

¹ Editor's Note: Now 145 or 155 years ago.



Returning with wood, unknown Cheyennes

Long before this the children had scattered out to play. Some of the tiniest, unless they had older sisters or cousins to take charge of them, stayed close by their mothers; but the older ones scattered to the river, where the boys were swimming and diving in the warm water, or were running races on the sand-bars, or perhaps burying each other, all except the head, in the sand, already heated by the strengthening sun. Other lads were busy near a mud-bank, modeling images of animals and people and lodges from the tenacious clay, and setting them in the sun to dry.

Some of the older boys and young men were practicing at shooting with the bow, or at throwing arrows, or were playing one of the wheel games, or sliding their slender, straight throwing-sticks far along the smooth ground. Big girls, not yet old enough to work at dressing hides, gathered in groups to play the football game elsewhere described.

During the morning parties of women and young girls started off to get wood, perhaps only two or three together, perhaps fifteen or twenty. They were a merry group, laughing, joking, and playing tricks on one an-

other. When the place was reached where they were to get wood, some gathered the sticks lying on the ground; others climbed up into the trees, breaking off and throwing down the dead branches, while those below trimmed and made them ready for the ropes. The wood was divided into even loads, and when all these were prepared, each woman took hers on her back, and, in single file, they set out for the camp, separating as they reached it, each turning off to her own lodge. In winter when there was snow on the ground, the companies of women made hard-beaten roads to and from the timber, where they gathered their fuel.

Other groups of women and young girls went out into the hills to gather roots, and were seen walking across the wide prairie, armed with their root-diggers, and then climbing the hills, and at last—mere dots in the distance—scattering out and occupied in their work.

The men left in the camp sat about in the shade of the lodges. Some smoked and gossiped; others worked at different implements which they were fashioning, a bow, arrows, a pipe, a pipestem, a whetstone, or what

not. Old men discussed the happenings of past years, their war journeys, their meetings with other tribes, visits that they had received from white people, or mysterious events that had taken place within their knowledge. Sometimes, near groups of these old men might be seen two or three growing boys, seated at a little distance behind them, eagerly drinking in the talk that flowed from the lips of these wise elders.

Some young men devoted much time to their personal appearance, plucking out the hairs from eyebrows, lips, and cheeks, combing and braiding their hair, and painting their faces. After this had been done to the dandy's satisfaction, he dressed himself in his finest clothing, and a little later rode about the camp so that people might admire him.

Before this some old women dragged out their green hides, and spread them on the ground, and were hard at work over them. Others pounded berries under a shade; others still sewed clothing.

As midday approached, and the sun grew hotter, many of the people retired to the lodges; the lodge-skins were raised all about and they sat there in the shade, while a warm breeze blew through the lodge.

As the afternoon advanced, men were seen returning from the hunt, riding horses laden with meat. Each dismounted before his lodge, and his women took the load from the horse, and either turned the animal loose, or, if it was a fine running horse, took it down to the stream and washed from it the blood and dirt with which it was likely to be covered.

Suddenly, from a nearby hill, sounded the war-cry, and there was a little stir among the growing men of the camp. The women and girls who had been off to dig roots were announcing their return and signaling with their blankets, and a crowd of men rushed out to try to rob them of some of their spoils, while the women in the camp hurried out of the lodges to see the fun.

As they were returning to the camp, the girls who went out to dig bear-roots and turnips tied their roots in small bundles of five or six. Often some girl who was slow at digging, and had secured but few roots, might propose that they should divide into two parties and gamble for the bunches of roots. If all agreed, one of the women threw her root-digger as far as she could, and the others stood in a row and threw their root-diggers at the first one. If a woman's missile touched the mark, her side won. If a root-digger from each side hit it, the game was a draw, while if none of the root-diggers thrown hit the mark, it also

was a draw. They competed as well by throwing the short root-diggers so that they should strike on one end and keep turning over, end for end, as they went. The farthest throw won. Or, in the same way, and for the same purpose, they threw the front marrow-bone of a buffalo, the metacarpal. Often, before betting, a woman might throw the bone, and then go to it and put her foot on it, and say, "If you do not win for me, you shall be pounded up and used to get grease from." This was a jocular threat, the expression of a hope that she might win.

Now, when the women were returning to camp with their roots, and when they had come within sight of the camp, they sat down in a line, and each woman put her roots a little way in front of her on the ground. Then some woman shouted the war-cry, and signaled to the camp with a blanket, as if a war-party were returning. When the people saw this, some of the young men took the parfleches used under the stone anvils on which meat and berries were pounded, and carried them as shields, while some had already made imitation shields of willow twigs. These young men mounted the oldest, laziest, ugliest horses they could find, and charged out on the women, who were busily gathering sticks and buffalo-chips with which to defend themselves.

When the two parties were close together, the girls pelted the men, who dodged and protected themselves behind their shields, and there was much confusion. Only a man who had been wounded in war, or had had his horse shot under him in real warfare, was permitted to take the roots away from the girls. Such men might do so, though before they secured their plunder they received a plentiful pelting. A man who was hit by a missile was supposed to be wounded, and out of the game. Other men might not dismount. However, after a time the men got some roots, and they retired to some hill to eat them, while the girls went on to camp with those they had saved. The parties who had been gathering roots were made up of little girls, grown girls, married women, and old women.

Among the Southern Cheyennes it is said that mounted men used to steal upon and surprise the women, and after counting a coup, to take their roots. If the women discovered the men coming, they sounded an alarm, and all rushed together to defend themselves. With a root-digger they drew on the ground before them a little furrow to represent breastworks. It was understood that no man might pass that furrow

to take roots, unless he had counted a coup or killed an enemy within breastworks. If none of the men had performed this feat, none might enter, and they rode about outside the circle, while the women hooted at and derided them. A man who had counted a coup within breastworks, however, dismounted and entered the circle, told of his coup, and took what roots he wished, sometimes loading himself down with them.

As the sun fell, and it grew cooler, people came out of their lodges, and the scene grew more active. Now the feast shout was heard, and children were seen going to and fro across the circle, carrying messages of invitation. Working women and working men had long ago put away their tasks; the evening meal was being prepared. From the hills, horses were driven in, and, followed by great clouds of dust, rushed down the bluffs and into the camp, where, after some had been caught, the others turned about and returned to the hills.

As darkness settled down, the bright firelight shone through the yellow lodge-skins; sparks came from each smoke-hole, as the fire was mended or fresh wood thrown upon it. For three or four hours the camp was a busy place. People were passing back and forth in all directions. Music began to be heard: songs for dancing from some lodge where young men and women were having a social dance; the quicker, more lively music of the gambling songs, from some home where the game of "hiding" was being played; the droning, minor chant of a doctor, whose song was a prayer to the favorable spirits for help; or the love notes of some boy, who was playing his flute on a hill away from the camp. To most of the songs time was kept by drumming; it might be on a large drum, for the dancers, or on a small hand drum, for the doctor; or perhaps only on a parfleche or on the ground, by the gamblers. Over all the camp there was the hum which always accompanied the assembling of a number of people, and this was broken by the neigh of a colt, the barking of dogs, the yelp of some sportive boy, the shout of some old man calling a friend to a feast, the musical laughter of the women, and in the distance the shrill howl of coyotes. Then suddenly the people seemed to grow fewer; one by one the fires burned down, and at last the camp was as silent as the prairie had been before the people moved in.

Long after the people had gone to bed, young people might be awake and stirring, and perhaps doing reckless things. One night, many years ago, Buffalo Wallow Woman, then a young girl, in com-

pany with another girl, her special friend, went out of the lodge late, after all the people were asleep. Lying on the ground near the lodge was a three-year-old colt that had never been ridden. He was fast asleep and his nose was resting on the ground. Buffalo Wallow Woman said to her friend, "I could ride that colt."

"Do not be foolish," said the other girl, "he would throw you off." Buffalo Wallow Woman gathered her blanket close about her, began to sing a song, and then jumped on the colt's back. She remembers how it sprang to its feet, and the first few bucks, but after that she must have lost her wits, and just clung to the horse.

The animal rushed about through the camp and frightened all the horses, which stampeded with a great noise. The people awoke and rushed from their lodges, and the horses dashed out of camp toward the hills. The next thing that Buffalo Wallow Woman remembers is that the colt stopped at the edge of a cut bank, while she flew over its head and alighted in the willows below. She was frightened, and under the cover of the bluff and the darkness crept back into the camp. It took the people a long time to gather their horses.

At the breaking up of any large gathering, as the camp at the Medicine Lodge, or at the renewing of the arrows,² there was a general presenting of gifts, chiefly of women's things.

The women relations of a young married man presented to his wife or to his mother-in-law food, dishes, shawls, or blankets, which the wife or mother-in-law distributed among the girl's female relations. These, on their part, were likely the next day to bring similar gifts—sometimes even lodges and lodge-poles—which they presented to the girl or to her mother, and which by them were given to those relations of the husband who had made the other presents. At these large gatherings the well-to-do young men usually possessed large new lodges, like those owned by the chiefs and the heads of the soldier bands. Such lodges were especially visited by parties of serenaders who were looking for presents.



² Editor's Note: See chapters on "Medicine Lodge" and "The Medicine Arrows and Sacred Hat."



Wife of White Elk

THE BOY AND THE GIRL

PEOPLE who know of the Indian only from books think of him solely as a warrior. As they have heard of him chiefly when he is at war, they do not realize that this phase of his life occupies but a small part of his existence, or that aside from this he has a communal and family life on which his well-being depends. He has a wife and little ones whom he loves as we do ours; parents and grandparents whom he respects for their experience and the wisdom derived from it; chiefs and rulers to whose words he listens and whose advice he follows, and spiritual directors, who tell him about the powers which rule the earth, the air, and the waters, and advise him in his relation to the forces of the unseen world. In other words, his is a complex life, not devoted solely to one pursuit, but full of varied and diverse interests. He must provide food for his family, must maintain his position in the camp, and must uphold the standing of the tribe in its relations to other peoples. All these duties call for the exercise of a discretion and self-restraint in his living which can be acquired only as a result of some system of education.

Even those who have had much to do with Indians hardly realize that their children are taught. They see the little boys constantly playing about the camp, engaged in sham battles, or swimming in the stream, or, in winter, sliding down hill on sleds made of buffalo-ribs, or throwing their javelin-like darts, or practicing with the bow and arrow, or stealthily hunting small birds or rabbits; and, contrasting this life of freedom with that of the white child, who spends much of his time in the schoolhouse, they assume that the Indian child grows up without instruction and without guidance. Yet no group of people could possibly live together in peace and harmony if each member of it followed his own inclinations without regard to the wishes and rights of his fellows. Like other people, the Indians have sufficient care for their own comfort to see to it that no member of the tribe shall unduly interfere with this, or infringe on the rights of others.

Among the Cheyennes the men were energetic, brave, and hardy; the women virtuous, devoted, and masterful. Their code of sexual morality was that held by the most civilized peoples. Such fathers and such mothers were likely to produce and rear children like themselves: impatient of control or restraint, perhaps,



Child on a dog travois, unknown Sioux

and fierce and cruel in taking revenge for injuries, yet after all possessing many of the qualities which we wish to see in our children: courage, independence, perseverance—manliness. These qualities they inherited, but how were they brought out?

The Indian child was carefully trained, and from early childhood. Its training began before it walked, and continued through its child life. The training consisted almost wholly of advice and counsel, and the child was told to do, or warned to refrain from doing, certain things, not because they were right or wrong, but because the act or failure to act was for his advantage or disadvantage in after life. He was told that to pursue a certain course would benefit him, and for that reason was advised to follow it. His pride and ambition were appealed to, and worthy examples among living men in the tribe were pointed out for emulation. Of abstract principles of right and wrong, as we understand them, the Indian knew nothing. The instructor of the Indian child did not attempt to entice him to do right by presenting the hope of heaven, nor to frighten him from evil by the fear of hell; instead, he pointed out that the respect and approbation of one's fellow men were to be desired, while their condemnation and contempt were to be dreaded. The Indian lived in public. He was constantly under the

eyes of the members of his tribe, and most of his doings were known to them. As he was eager for the approval of his fellows, and greedy of their praise, so public opinion promised the reward he hoped for and threatened the punishment he feared.

When a Cheyenne baby was born it was warmly wrapped up, and for a time carefully protected from the weather. During the first two or three months of its existence, if the weather was cold or stormy, the child was carried about in its mother's arms, and was not laced on a baby-board or cradle until it had become so hardy as to be able to endure some degree of exposure.

As soon as the child had become strong and hardy enough, and the weather had grown milder, it was lashed on the cradle or baby-board. During a good part of the time it was carried about on its board, which, when the mother put it down, was sometimes hung up to a lodge-pole, or leaned against the side of the lodge in the camp. When the child was not on the board, and was not scrambling about on the ground, it was carried on its mother's back, her blanket or robe holding the little body close to hers, passing around her shoulders, and being held by her in front. The child's head was a little higher than the mother's; its hips lay between her shoulders, its heels showing



Wife of Strong Left Hand (on horseback), with mother and children

through the blanket just above her loins. In such a position the child seemed perfectly comfortable and at home. It ate, if the mother passed food to it over her shoulder, or slept, its head rolling about on its neck, as its mother moved, like a toy Chinese mandarin.

The mothers played with their babies, and tried to keep them amused and quiet. Indians never whip their children, nor punish them in any way. Sometimes a mother, irritated by the resistance of a yelling child, will give it an impatient shake by one arm as she drags it along, but I have never witnessed anything in the nature of the punishment of a child by a parent.

When the camp moved, the women carried the babies on their backs, or hung the boards on saddles or travois poles, while the little boys old enough to look out for themselves ran along on foot, or rode colts or horses, as the case might be. The little girls rode by twos or threes on top of the packs. Many children, however,—too young to be allowed to go without the guidance of some older person, yet too old and big to be carried by an overworked woman who was busy driving and minding half a dozen pack-ponies—were carried on a travois, confined in a cage made of willow twigs and shaped like a sweat-house. The flat bottom rested across the travois, which was hauled by some steady old packhorse. In old times, when many children were carried in travois hauled by dogs, runaways sometimes occurred, though not often. A dog, tempted by the sudden appearance of game, might start off in pursuit, and, tipping over the travois, leave the child howling on the prairie, to be recovered by the alarmed mother. Usually, however, the mother led the dog that hauled her baby.

When a little baby reached the age of from three to six months, it was time for its ears to be pierced. At the next Medicine Lodge, therefore, or at any great dance or gathering of the people, the mother took the child to the place of the meeting; and the father requested the old crier to call out and ask a certain named person to pierce the child's ears. The person invited to do this might actually pierce the ears, or might merely pierce them ceremonially—i.e., make the motions of piercing them. Before doing either, he counted a coup, telling of some important act performed in war. If the man merely performed the operation ceremonially, the ears might afterward be pierced in fact by anyone, without ceremony. As an acknowledgment of the service, the father presented the person with from one to three horses, and perhaps other good presents.

A father who was very fond of his child, and could afford it, might have the child's ears pierced several times. He might give a horse each to two or three different men for the same service. In one reported case, a man gave eight horses for this purpose. Such liberality showed the man's affection for his child, and caused him to be talked about and praised.

Occasionally, among tribes on the buffalo plains, we find accounts of cases where a father himself has been obliged to care for and bring up an unweaned babe, without a woman's help. I have heard of such instances among the Cheyennes. Young Woman, who was born in 1830—three years before the stars fell—has told me that she was so reared. Her mother was an Arapaho, and her father half Cheyenne and half Arapaho.

When her father was a young man returning from the warpath, he learned that his wife had run off with another man. Instead of returning to the camp, he sent a friend to it to get his little baby, and when it was brought to him, he carried it from where they were camped, on the head of the Platte River, south to Bent's Fort, on the Arkansas. The baby was unweaned, and to support it he killed cows which had calves, and cutting out the udders gave them to the child to suck. In the same way he killed female deer and antelope, and let the child suck the udders. So he nourished her until he reached the Cheyenne camp, where a woman took charge of the child. Afterward she lived among the Northern Cheyennes.

At first children are called only by pet names. *Mōk' sō īs*, meaning "pot belly," is a term of endearment for a little boy; *Mōk' sō īs'* is a term for a little girl. Such names were used only for very small children. When a child reached the age of five or six years, a more formal name was given it. A boy might be named after his father's brother, or after his grandfather. A good name was always chosen, though he might have also a nickname by which he was commonly called. A woman's daughter might not be named after the relations of the mother, but after some relative of the father. In fact, children were almost always named after their father's relatives.

Formal names were always given to children by the time they were six or seven years of age, and sometimes much earlier. Not long after a child was born, the father's brother-in-law or father might send for the baby, and when it was brought to him might take it in his arms and give it his name, and a horse. He would say, "I give him my name," then he speci-

fied which one of his names he wished given. If the uncle did not send for the child, the father was very likely to give the child the name of one of its uncles; or if it had no uncle, of its grandfather. A cousin, or some near relative, notified the man whose name had been given to the child, and he was expected to present to it a horse. The name having been given and the horse received, the same horse was given away when the child's ears were pierced.

In the case of a girl, the same thing happened. The father's sister very likely made a cradle for the baby, whom she herself wrapped up and put in the cradle, and then gave her a name and a pony. After a time the man gave his sister a horse in return for the cradle. If the sister did not offer to name the child, the mother might choose a sister-in-law's name, and she was expected to give a horse. The child might be named after a brother or a sister killed in battle. Then, of course, no horse was given. Names thus remained in families. Such a name the child retained until he had made a journey to war.

The infant's education began at an early age, its mother teaching it first to keep quiet, in order that it should not disturb the older people in the lodge. Crying babies were hushed, or, if they did not cease their noise, were taken out of the lodge and off into the brush, where their screams would not disturb

anyone. If older people were talking, and a tiny child entered the lodge and began to talk to its mother, she held up her finger warningly, and it ceased to talk, or else whispered its wants to her. Thus the first lesson that the child learned was one of self-control—self-effacement in the presence of its elders. It remembered this all through life.

This lesson learned, it was not taught much more until old enough, if a boy, to have given him a bow and arrows, or if a girl, to have a doll, made of deer-skin, which she took about with her everywhere. Perhaps her mother or aunt made for her a tiny board or cradle for the doll, and on this she commonly carried it about on her back, after the precise fashion in which the women carried their babies. She treated her doll as all children do theirs, dressing and undressing it, singing lullabies to it, lacing it on its board, and, as time passed, making for it various required articles of feminine clothing. Often she had as a doll one of the tiny puppies so common in Indian camps, taking it when its eyes were scarcely open, and keeping it until the dog had grown too active and too much disposed to wander to be longer companionable.

As soon as she was old enough to walk for considerable distances, the little girl followed her mother everywhere, trotting along behind her, or at her side, when she went for water or for wood. In all things she



Girls with toy tipis and dolls, unknown Cheyennes

imitated her parent. Even when only three or four years of age, she might be seen marching proudly along, bowed forward under the apparent weight of a back-load of slender twigs, which she carried in exact imitation of her mother, who staggered under a heavy burden of stout sticks.

Boys learned to ride almost as soon as they learned to walk. From earliest babyhood infants were familiar with horses and their motions, and children two or three years of age often rode in front of or behind their mothers, clinging to them or to the horses' manes. They thus gained confidence, learned balance, and became riders, just as they learned to walk—by practice. They did not fear a horse, nor dread a fall, for they began to ride old gentle pack-ponies, which never made unexpected motions; and by the time they were five or six years of age, the boys were riding young colts bareback. Soon after this they began to go into the hills to herd the ponies. They early became expert in the use of the rope for catching horses.

Little girls, too, learned to ride at an early age, and while they did not have the practice that boys had, they became good horsewomen, and in case of need could ride hard and far.

In summer little girls as well as little boys spent much time in the water, and all were good swimmers. The courage of such children in the water is shown by an incident in the lives of three old women who in 1912 were still alive on the Tongue River Indian Reservation. When ten or twelve years of age, these children had been sent down to the stream to get some water. Their mothers were at work fleshing buffalo-hides and had so many to work on that the hides were beginning to get dry. The little girls were sent to get water to keep the hides damp until their mothers could flesh them. They went to the stream, and one of them proposed that before carrying up the water they should take a swim. They took off their clothes and ran out onto a fallen tree that projected over the water; and, when about to dive in, one of them noticed a hole in the bank deep under the water, and proposed that they should see where it led to. They swam under the water into the hole. It was dark and nothing could be seen; but the little girls felt something large and soft pass by them, going out of the hole as they were going in. They went on a few feet and saw a little light and, raising their heads, found themselves in a beaver's house. A little frightened by the creature that they had met in the water, which was of course a beaver, they did not like to go back and, seeing the opening at





Unknown Cheyenne girls

the top of the house through which light filtered, they readily broke a hole through the roof and crept out onto the bottom. Here they found themselves in the midst of a thick growth of wild roses and had a very difficult time, and were much scratched up in getting out of the bushes. This must have taken place perhaps between 1850 and 1860, and the women were Buffalo Wallow Woman, Omaha Woman, and the wife of Big Head, who was sister to White Bull.

Little companies of small boys and girls often went off camping. The little girls packed the dogs, and moved a little way from the camp and there put up their little lodges—made and sewed for them by their mothers—arranging them in a circle just as did the old people in the big camp. In all that they did they imitated their elders. The little boys who accompanied them were the men of the mimic camp.

In the children's play camps the little girls used tiny lodgepoles—often the tall weed-stalks that are used for windbreaks about the lodge—and the boys sometimes acted as horses and dragged the lodgepoles, or hauled travois with the little babies on them. To the sticks they rode as horses, as well as on the dogs, they sometimes fixed travois.

When the lodges were put up the boys used to stand in line, and the older girls asked them to choose their mothers. Each boy selected the girl who should be his mother, and they played together. The girls played in this way until they were pretty well grown, fourteen or fifteen years of age; but the boys gave it up when they were younger, for they strove to be men early, and usually soon after they had reached their twelfth year they began to try to hunt buffalo, killing calves as soon as they could ride well and were strong enough to bend the bow.

Sometimes two camps of children, one representing some hostile tribe, were established near each other. The boys of one camp would go on the warpath against those of the other, and they fought like seasoned men, taking captives and counting coups. They tied bunches of buffalo-hair to poles for scalps, and after the fight the successful party held dances of rejoicing. They carried lances made of willow branches, shields made of bent willow shoots with the leafy twigs hanging down like feathers, and little bows and arrows, the latter usually slender, straight weed-stalks, often with a prickly-pear thorn for a point. After the camp had been pitched, another party of boys might attack it, and while its men were fighting and charging the enemy, trying to drive them back, its women,

if they thought the battle was going against them, would pull down the lodges, pack up their possessions, and begin to run away. In such a battle the men might often shoot each other, and when the wounded fell, men and women rushed out and dragged them back, so that the enemy should not touch them and count a coup. If the village was captured, all the food its people had was taken from them. This often consisted chiefly of roots gathered by the women, and tender grass-shoots, of which they often gathered a great deal.

The little boys when playing at going to war rode sticks for horses, and each one also led or dragged another stick, which represented another horse, the boy's war-horse. If an attack was threatened by a pretended war-party, those attacked changed horses, and leaving their common horses and their things together in one place, they rode out to meet the enemy and the battle began. The opposing forces charged and retreated forward and backward, just as in a real battle. Each party knew or suspected where the others had left their things, and if one group drove back the other, it might capture its opponent's horses and other property and thus win a great victory.

In their pretended buffalo hunts also the boys rode sticks for horses, and lashed them with their quirts to make them run fast. Sometimes, when buffalo were close by and the real hunters of the big camp killed them near at hand, the little boys rode their stick horses out to the killing ground and returned to the play camp with loads of actual meat tied behind them on their horses. Some boys merely picked up pieces of the meat that had been thrown away, but often a good-natured hunter would give the lads pieces of meat to use in their camp.

If there were no buffalo about, perhaps some children went out from the camp, and returning by a roundabout way, pretended to be buffalo. Others in the camp, discovering them, prepared to go out to surround them. The children representing the buffalo went out on the prairie in a company; they were both boys and girls—bulls and cows. Some pretended to be eating grass, and some were lying down.

The boys who were to run buffalo had small bows and arrows. Those who represented the buffalo carried sticks three or four feet long, sharpened at one end. On this sharp end was impaled the flat leaf of a prickly-pear, which still bore its thorns. In the middle of the leaf, on either side, was rubbed a little spot of dirt. This leaf had two meanings: it represented the

buffalo's horn or weapon of defense, but, besides this, the little spot of dirt represented the buffalo's heart. If an arrow pierced this, the buffalo fell down and died.

Some of the boy buffalo runners started out on the hunt far ahead of the others, so as to get beyond the pretended buffalo and cut off their flight. The others formed a wide crescent when making the charge.



Amy Tough Feather with baby

When the proper time came, the hunters rushed toward the herd, which in turn ran away. The larger boys, who represented the bulls, ran slowly behind the herd, and the hunters avoided them, because, if wounded, they might turn to fight, and chase those who were pursuing them; and if they overtook the pursuers, might strike them with the prickly-pear leaves which they held on the sticks, and fill the hunters' skin with thorns. If this happened, it was told through the camp, "A bull has hooked and hurt" so-and-so. If the dirt-marked center of the prickly-pear leaf was hit, and the buffalo who carried it dropped to the ground dead, the hunters pretended to butcher it, and to carry the meat home. Often some of the buffalo proved too fast for the hunters and ran a long way off, and then stood on the prairie and looked back. The hunters could not overtake them.

With their dog travois, the little girls followed the hunters out to the killing ground. Perhaps a number of the boys might appear on the prairie not far from camp and pretend to be wild horses, and others started out from camp on their stick horses to chase and try to catch them, throwing ropes over those that they overtook.

The little girls often had trouble with their pack-dogs, just as did their mothers in real life. Many old and gentle dogs stayed about with them, but others, younger and more playful, were hard to catch when they wished to move camp, or might even run away and go back to the real camp.

Food must be had for the mimic camp, and the children went down to the creek to get fish. They thrust straight twigs in the mud of the bottom, across the stream in a half circle, the concavity being upstream. The sticks were so close together that the fish could not pass between them. In the middle of the stream, in what would be the center of the circle, if it were complete, a taller twig was thrust into the stream-bed, to the base of which a piece of meat was tied. Above the half-circle, on one bank, was fastened a flexible fence or gate of willow twigs closely strung together on sinew, and made like a mattress or a back-rest. It was long enough to reach from one bank to the other.

When all preparations had been made, the boys went a long way up the stream, and entering it, formed a line across it, and came down, wading through the water, beating it with sticks, making a great noise, and so driving the fish before them. If the water was roily, the girls who remained below near the trap perhaps

saw no fish, but if there were many there, they tugged at the meat and shook the willow twig which stood alone. Then the girls quickly entered the stream, and stretched the flexible fence or gate across it, making it impossible for the fish to pass up the stream. All now plunged into the water, and with their hands caught and threw out on the bank the fish that were confined between the half-circle of twigs and the fence above it. In this way they caught many fish, and these they cooked and ate.

The children did not stay out all night, but during the day they pretended that it was night, and went to bed. During the day they moved the camp often; even every hour or two.

These children imitated the regular family life, pretending to be man and wife, and the tiny babies—who were their brothers and sisters—served them for children. Little boys courted little girls; a boy sent to the girl's lodge sticks to represent horses, and if his offer was accepted received with her other sticks and gifts in return. Babies able to sit up were taken out into these camps, but not those that were too young. Sometimes a baby might get hungry and cry, and its little sister who was caring for it was obliged to carry it home to her mother, so that the baby might nurse.

Soon after the little boy was able to run about easily, a small bow and some arrows were made for him by his father, uncle, or elder brother, and he was encouraged to use them. When he went out of the lodge to play, his mother said to him, "Now, be careful; do nothing bad; do not strike anyone; do not shoot anyone with your arrow." He was likely to remember these oft-repeated injunctions.

After that, much of his time was spent in practice with the bow. He strove constantly to shoot more accurately at a mark, to send the shaft farther and farther, and to drop his arrow nearer and nearer to a given spot. As he grew more accustomed to the use of the bow, he hunted sparrows and other small birds among the sagebrush and in the thickets along the streams, with other little fellows of his own age; and as his strength and skill increased, began to make excursions on the prairie for rabbits, grouse, and even turkeys. Little boys eight or ten years of age killed numbers of small birds with their arrows, and sometimes even killed them on the wing.

Though he keenly enjoyed the pursuit, the Cheyenne boy did not hunt merely for pleasure. To him it was serious work. He was encouraged to hunt by his parents and relatives, and was told that he

must try hard to be a good hunter, so that hereafter he might be able to furnish food for the lodge, and might help to support his mother and sisters. When successful, he was praised; and if he brought in a little bird, it was cooked and eaten as a matter of course, quite as seriously as any other food was treated. The first large bird, or the first rabbit, killed by the boy, he exhibited to the family with no little pride, in which all shared.

In their hunting, these tiny urchins displayed immense caution and patience, creeping stealthily about through the underbrush of the river bottom, or among the sagebrush on the prairie, striving to approach the woodpeckers climbing the trunk of a cottonwood tree, or the blackbirds swinging on the top of a bush, or the meadow larks stalking about in the grass. The care with which they twisted and wound in and out of cover when approaching the game, taking advantage of every inequality in the ground, of the brush, and of the clumps of rye grass, was precisely what they would have to practice when hunting later in life. At first, to be sure, they missed most of their shots, but they did not become discouraged, and now and then they killed a bird.

The older boys often set out in companies of four or five, and traveling across the prairie, a bow-shot apart, beat a considerable width of country. If game was detected, they strove to approach within shot before startling it, and often succeeded. Jackrabbits, however, were likely to bounce up under their feet, and to scurry away, pursued by a flight of arrows. If the animal escaped, the boys watched it, if possible, until it had stopped for the last time, taken its last look about, and settled down to hide. Then, having closely marked the spot, they very slowly and cautiously approached it in a half-circle, scanning the ground with the utmost care. If one discovered the rabbit squatting close, he indicated its position to the others, and they tried to surround and, if possible, to shoot it, before it started to run. They were often very successful in this hunting. Sometimes in the spring they succeeded in killing a kid antelope or two—a great prize.

While engaged in this hunting, the boys not only learned how to approach and secure game, but also unconsciously picked up a knowledge of many other things incidental to success in life. They came to understand the signs of the prairie, to know the habits of wild animals, learned how to observe, how to become trackers, where the different birds and animals were found, and how they acted under different conditions;

and were training themselves to habits of endurance and patience.

As little boys grew larger they were often warned by their parents and uncles always to be quiet when older people were about, not to be noisy, not to play in the lodge, not to run in front of anyone. In the lodge they were not allowed to pound or knock on anything, and especially not to tap or hack with a knife any stick in the lodge, and above all not to tap on a stick in the fire. To do this might cause bad luck; a boy who did any of these things might even cut off his finger.

If by an unlucky chance a boy at play threw a stone or a piece of dirt or a mud ball against the lodge of a priest—a medicine man—it was necessary, to avert bad luck, that he should be purified by the medicine man, who unwrapped his sacred bundle, and with long ceremony and much passing of hands over the offender, and wiping him off with white sage-brush, prayed that his error might be pardoned. Unless this were done, the medicine would be broken, and many evil things might happen. Perhaps the lad might be struck by lightning.

From the beginning the boy was taught that his chief duty in life was to be brave, and to go to war and fight. He was treated always with great consideration, for it was remembered that he might not be long with his people, that in his first fight he might be killed; and, therefore, while he was with them they wished to treat him well—to make him comfortable and happy. For this reason, a boy was better treated than a girl. He had a good bed, often at the back of the lodge. For a lad to bring in a stick of wood or a bucket of water was considered unfitting. If he did a thing like this, it was talked of in the camp as something to be regretted, as more or less of a scandal.

When a boy was about twelve years of age, some old grandfather began to talk with him, and advise him as to how he should live. He was instructed in manly duties. He was told that when older people spoke to him, he must listen and must do as they told him. If anyone directed him to go after horses, he should start at once. He should do nothing bad in the camp, and should not quarrel with his fellows. He should get up early; should never let the sun find him in bed, but must be early out in the hills looking for the horses. These were his especial charge, and he must watch them, never lose them, and see that they had water always. He was told that when he grew older it was his duty to hunt and support his mother and sisters. A man must take good care of his

The Boy and the Girl

arms and keep them in good order. He must never boast. To go about bragging of the brave things that he might intend to do was not manly. If he performed brave deeds, he himself should not speak of them; his comrades would do that. It was predicted that if he listened to the advice given him he would grow up to be a good man, and would amount to something. In this way their fathers, uncles, and grandfathers talked to the boys, and often wise old men harangued little groups who were playing about the camp.

A boy had usually reached his twelfth, thirteenth, or fourteenth year when he first went out to hunt buf-

falo. Before this he had been instructed in the theory of buffalo running, and had been told how and where to ride, and where to hit the buffalo if he was to be successful. If on his first chase a boy killed a calf, his father was greatly pleased, and, if a well-to-do man, he might present a good horse to some poor man, and in addition might give a feast and invite poor people to come and eat with him. Perhaps he might be still more generous, and at the end of the feast give to his guests presents of robes or blankets. As soon as the boy reached home and his success was known, the father called out from his lodge something like this:



Unknown Cheyenne boy



Unknown Cheyenne boy
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"My son has killed a little calf, and I give the best horse that I have to Blue Hawk." If he gave a feast, he explained again, saying: "My little boy has killed a calf. He is going to be a good man and a good hunter. We have had good luck." The man to whom the horse had been presented rode about the camp to show it to the people, and as he rode he sang a song, mentioning the name of the donor and telling why the horse had been given to him.

Bird Bear, whose boy name was Crow Bed, told me that as a child his father talked to him but little, while his grandfather gave him much advice. This was natural enough, since at that age the father was still engaged in war and hunting, which occupied most of his time, while the older man had passed the period of active life.

Crow Bed was quite young when he went on his first buffalo chase, but he had a good horse, and was soon among the buffalo and close up alongside of a little calf. He was excited and shot a good many arrows into it, but he kept shooting until the animal fell. After he had killed the calf he felt glad and proud. He dismounted and butchered the calf, and with much labor put it on his horse and took the whole animal home, not cutting the meat from the bones and leaving the skeleton on the ground, as a man would have done. When he reached his lodge, his people laughed at him a little for bringing it all home, but his father praised him and said that he had done well. "After a little while," he said, "you will get to killing larger ones, and pretty soon you will kill big buffalo."

His father then shouted out, calling a certain man named White Thunder to come to the lodge and see what his son had done; that he had brought meat into the camp. After White Thunder had come to the lodge, his father presented to White Thunder the horse the boy had ridden and the pack of meat that he had brought in. The incident was discussed all through the village, so that everyone knew of Crow Bed's success.

A year or two later, when a party was made up to go to war against the Snakes, his grandfather advised Crow Bed to go with it. Before they started out the old man said to him: "Now, when the party is about to make a charge on the enemy, do not be afraid. Do as the others do. When you fight, try to kill. When you meet the enemy, if you are brave and kill and count a coup, it will make a man of you, and the people will look on you as a man. Do not fear anything. It is not a disgrace to be killed in a fight."

When Crow Bed started, his father gave away the best horse that he had, because his son was starting on his first warpath. He cried out, asking any poor person in the village who needed a horse to come and see his son starting to war for the first time. He did the same thing when Crow Bed returned from the warpath, although on this first war journey the party had traveled for many days without finding enemies, and returned to the village without accomplishing anything.

My friend, Shell,—who died years ago, more than eighty years of age,—told me that his instruction came chiefly from his father, who gave much advice to him and to the other boys of the family. He remembered especially the father's warning to his children to be truthful and honest, never to lie. His father was a chief, and almost every night there were many people in his lodge, talking about different things, and the children listened to the conversation of their elders, and learned much. Shell was thirteen years of age the summer when he went on his first buffalo hunt. His father was a skillful arrow-maker, and the boy had plenty of arrows; and as he was riding a good horse, he killed three calves on this first chase. After the hunt was over, his father, who also had been running buffalo, came back and asked the boy if he had killed anything. Shell pointed out the three calves, and his father got off and cut up the meat. When they reached the camp, his father called out to a certain man to come and see what his son had done. When the man reached the lodge, his father gave him the horse Shell had ridden, and the pack of meat which it bore.

As Shell and his brothers grew older, his father used to teach them all good things, but especially that when they went to war they must be brave. That is why the Cheyennes used to fight so hard. They were taught it from childhood.

His father used to tell him never to associate with women, and, above all, never to run off with one. He would say: "Whenever you find a woman that you love, give horses and marry her. Then you will be married in the right way. Whenever a man runs off with a woman, both are talked about, and this is bad for both."

Older men gave much advice to their grandsons, sons, and nephews, and tried constantly to warn them against mistakes and to make life easier for them. A well-brought-up man was likely to advise his grown son that occasionally, when he killed a good fat buffalo, he should seek out some old man who possessed

spiritual power and offer him the meat, in order to secure his friendliness and the benefit of his prayers. If the old man accepted the present the carcass was pulled around on its belly until the head faced the east. The old man slit the animal down its back, took out the right kidney, and handed it to the young man, who pointed it toward the east, south, west, and north, then up to the sky, and down to the ground, and placed it on a buffalo-chip. The old man was likely to say to the young man: "May you live to be as old as I am, and always have good luck in your hunting. May you and your family live long and always have abundance." As the old man went back to camp with the meat, he called aloud the name of the young man, so that all might know he had given him a buffalo. This was an ancient custom.

The training of the little girls was looked after even more carefully than that of the boys. Their mothers, aunts, and grandmothers constantly gave them good advice. They recommended them especially to stay at home, not to run about the camp, and this was so frequently impressed on them that it be-



Unknown Cheyenne boy

came a matter of course for them to remain near the lodge, or to go away from it only in company. Both mothers and fathers talked to their daughters, and quite as much to their sons, but in a different way. The mother said: "Daughter, when you grow up to be a young woman, if you see anyone whom you like, you must not be foolish and run off with him. You must marry decently. If you do so, you will become a good woman, and will be a help to your brothers and to your cousins." They warned girls not to be foolish, and the advice was repeated over and over again.

As a girl grew larger she was sent for water, and when still older she took a rope and went for wood, carrying it on her back. The old women early began to teach the girls how to cut moccasins, and how to apply quills and to make beadwork. As they grew older they learned how to cook, and to dress hides, but girls were not put regularly to dressing hides until they were old enough to marry.

Boys and girls alike had each some special friend of their own sex to whom they were devotedly attached, and each pair of friends talked over the advice received from parents.

Children seldom or never quarreled or fought among themselves, and though, as they grew older, continually engaging in contests of strength, such as wrestling and kicking matches, and games somewhat like football, they rarely lost their temper. Two boys might be seen swaying to and fro in a wrestling bout, each encouraged by the shouts of his partisans among the onlookers, and each doing his best. When finally one was thrown all the spectators raised a great shout of laughter, but he who had been overcome arose laughing too, for he realized that the others were not ridiculing him, but were showing their enjoyment of the contest they had witnessed. The Cheyenne boys are naturally good-natured and pleasant, and the importance of living on good terms with their fellows having been drilled into them from earliest childhood, they accepted defeat and success with equal cheerfulness. Among a group of white children there would be much more bickering.

Usually, but by no means always, the Cheyenne boy learned to kill buffalo before he made his first journey to war. Sometimes—as in the case of Bald Faced Bull—the little fellow's ambition for glory, and ignorance of what war meant, led him to join a war-party at a very tender age. Little boys who did this received much consideration from the older members of the party, and were carefully looked after. They

were taken in charge by some older man, and were kept apart from the younger members, who would be likely to tease and embarrass them, and in all ways the journey was made easy for them. Yet when the moment came to fight, they were given every opportunity to distinguish themselves, which meant to fight and to be killed. Because on the occasion referred to Bald Faced Bull was riding a very fast horse, he was chosen as one of ten to charge the camp of the enemy, the most dangerous work in the fight. While such little boys did not often accomplish any great feat, yet sometimes they did so, and returned to the village covered with glory, to the unspeakable delight and pride of their families, and to be objects of respect and admiration to their less ambitious and energetic playfellows. Even when they did nothing especially noteworthy, they were undergoing a training, were learning to know themselves, and to be steady under all conditions, and were hardening themselves to the toils which were to be their most important occupation for the next twenty-five years.

If on such a journey the boy performed any especially creditable act—if by some chance he killed an enemy, or counted a coup—some one of his near relations, his mother or aunt or an uncle, gave away a horse on the return of the party, and presented him with a new name. If the mother gave the horse, she selected a name that her brother had borne; if the aunt, she chose her brother's name; if the uncle, his brother's name. The name was always a good name—that of some brave man. The name before being given was discussed in the home and chosen with deliberation. If the name given was that of a living man, that man took another name, perhaps that of his father or of an uncle.

A result of all this training was that the best of the Cheyenne youths had for their highest ambition the wish to be brave and to fight well; and hence they desired always to be going to war. If a few of them were traveling over the prairie in time of war, and people were seen, there was immediate rejoicing. "Ha!" one would say to his neighbor, "there are some people at last. Now we are going to have a good time. Now we will have fun. Hurry! hurry! Get ready to fight!" Meantime, any loads carried on the saddles, all extra clothing, and often the saddles themselves, were stripped from the horses and thrown on the ground, and the party, laughing and chattering in the highest possible spirits at the prospect of a fight, set out in hot haste to attack the strangers. If these proved to



Unknown Cheyenne boy

be friends, the disappointment of the young men was great. I recall a case in which a party of Cheyennes, scouting for the Government, charged a group of about their own number, which they presently discovered to be other scouts of their own people under command of the late Lieut. Edward W. Casey. They were much cast down.

A boy's education by advice and admonition usually ended with his first journey to war. When he had made that, he was supposed to have reached years of discretion and to have acquired by practical experience enough discretion to decide for himself what he ought to do, or to consult with older men and ask their advice. The first war journey was often long and hard and without any results, the boy returning to the village with nothing to show for his trip, but with a store of practical knowledge which would be useful to him all his life long.



CERTAIN CAMP CUSTOMS

IN the ordinary life of the camp there is much of custom and ceremonial, all of it interesting, but so great in volume that it is impossible to learn any great part of it, or, within any ordinary limits, to set down even the part that one has learned.

A good part of the life of home and camp was conducted after established forms which were supposed to be known to everyone, and the failure to observe these conventions was formerly regarded by Indians as an extraordinary proceeding, much, in fact, as a breach of good manners would be looked at by well-reared people in civilized society. Thus, in the old days it was a common remark among Indians that white men did not seem to know how to act—how to conduct themselves. Of course, in these later times, a long experience of the white man's ignorance and disregard of their methods and ways of life has more or less accustomed them to such violations, and they no longer feel their former sense of injury and indignation at what they regard as his bad manners.

THE LODGE

In entering the lodge the visitor turned to the right, and paused or sat down. The owner was sitting on his bed at the back of the lodge—the west side, or perhaps farther to the south—and when he welcomed the person entering, he asked him to come back and sit down. The place of honor was at the left of and next to the owner, who with his family lived to the left of the door, though his sleeping place might be at the back of the lodge. It was not etiquette to go to that part of the lodge occupied by the family, nor to pass between the fire and the owner of the lodge; nor, indeed, was it good manners to pass between anyone sitting in the lodge and the fire. Well-bred people passed behind the sitters, who leaned forward to give them room.

In the lodge, as a member of the owner's family, there was often a boy or a young man who was not related to it. Boys from ten to fifteen years of age, orphans or young relatives who had no one to care for them, often lived in a man's lodge and herded his horses, and performed other small services. The lad received his food and clothing, and after a time, when the lodge owner thought best, he gave him a pony. When the boy was fifteen or sixteen years of age, he

perhaps went on the warpath. If on this first warpath he did well, showed courage, or was so fortunate as to capture horses or to count a coup, he no longer herded horses when he returned, but he still lived in the lodge, hunted, and turned in his meat there, and remained a member of the family. Such boys did not make the fires, but they cut the tobacco, lighted pipes, and carried messages. The fires were lighted by the women.

SMOKING

In old times smoking was an important ceremony, which different men practiced in different ways. In some cases no one might leave or enter a lodge while the owner was smoking. Some men went so far as to tie up the door of the lodge. No one must stand up or walk about in the lodge. Certain men, who were very particular, when about to smoke took down everything that was hanging up in the lodge, on the back-rests or to the lodge-poles. When they smoked they began by ceremonially pointing the pipestem to the sky, to the ground, and to the four directions, in order, and saying: "Spirit Above, smoke. Earth, smoke. Four cardinal points, smoke." Then the man made his prayer for help. The smokes to the four cardinal points were offered to the spirits who dwell in those quarters.

The pipe when passed always went with the sun, from right to left, starting from the owner of the lodge. When the man sitting next to the door had smoked, the pipe might not be passed across the doorway, but was handed back all around the circle—no one smoking—to the man on the opposite side of the door. He smoked, and then the man on his left, and so the pipe went on to the owner, or until it was smoked out. In primitive times they had a native tobacco that they cultivated and used for smoking. At present, in the South, they mix dried leaves of the sumac with the tobacco they smoke. In old times they put a little buffalo grease with this. In the North they use "red-willow" (cornel) bark with tobacco.

The Cheyennes think it unlucky to touch anything with the stem of the pipe while smoking. The pipe must be held straight up as it is passing from man to man, not passed across the body, the stem or bowl first, but held upright, the bowl down. Still there are various individual ways of passing the pipe. Some hold it so that the neighbor can take hold of the top of the stem; others, so that he can grasp the lower part. Others point the stem downward, and others



Red Bead Woman smoking

still—and this is more usual—rest the bowl of the pipe on the ground as it passes. Many men will not receive the pipe unless it is passed to them in what they consider the proper way.

Often they make a prayer as they take the first smoke—sometimes a very long prayer. In old times some men would not smoke unless a little powdered buffalo-chip was scattered on top of the tobacco when lighting it. This was only to make the fire catch more readily. Some would not smoke unless alone. Nowadays, old men when cleaning the pipe empty the ashes carefully into a little tin can, on which the cover is replaced. None will scatter their ashes after smoking, but keep them carefully in a little pile near the edge of the fire. This has some relation to the sacredness or solemnity of the act of smoking. When old men are smoking, nothing must be beaten in the lodge. There must be no sudden noise. No one must tap on a stick. Dishes must not be knocked together. No one should walk in front of the smoker; that is to say, between him and the fire. In old times, as a rule, only the older men smoked. Young men were advised not to do so, as it would make them short-winded, so that they could not run long and far. In old times many men would not smoke if a woman was in the lodge.

FEAST AND STORYTELLING

In buffalo days men were continually calling to the feast. The crier was asked to go out and call the names of those invited, mentioning each man's name, and bidding him to the lodge of the host. If it was not a formal feast given to a large number, but only two or three men were invited, the host might send a boy or even a little child, who would go to the man's lodge and say, "My father calls you." The meal usually consisted of roasted ribs or boiled hump ribs, or boiled tongue, of the buffalo.

A feast was begun and ended with prayer, and before eating, a little from each kettle was offered to the spirits, the food being held up to the sky and then placed on the ground at the edge of the fire. Private persons did the same when eating, in the lodge or elsewhere. The food offered lay where it had been deposited by the fire till the lodge was swept. When it had been held up to the sky and then placed on the ground, it was supposed to be consumed, and no longer to be of any value.

At feasts were often related the stories and traditions of the tribe. A person might make a feast and ask a certain man or woman to come and tell a particular story. After the guests had eaten, he or she would



Cheyenne camp

tell the story, and at its close might possibly present the story to some individual in the lodge, and after this had been done that person might tell it. At such gatherings people who were well known as story-tellers were in great demand.

When a man desired to have stories told in his lodge for entertainment at night he sent to some old man well known as a story-teller a message asking him to come to his lodge and eat. A comfortable place was fixed for the guest to sit and lie, and food was prepared, but not cooked. Meantime the news that such a man was to tell stories at this lodge had gone through the camp and very likely many people gathered there to listen.

When the old man came in and sat down, a pipe was offered him, and he smoked. When he received the pipe he raised and lowered it four times, touching the bowl of the pipe to the ground four times, and after he had finished smoking he went through the ceremonial motions of passing hands over legs, arms, and head. This was a promise to tell the truth—that is, to relate the stories as he had heard them—and a prayer for help to do this. Then food was cooked and set by the side of the fire.

Many of the stories told by the Cheyennes were the property of particular families, and might be related only by members of these families, grandparents and parents carefully teaching the children these tales of the past. Such stories were often personal property, and only those to whom they had been presented might repeat them.

Certain stories were told in sections. A short story might be told, and at a certain point the narrator stopped and after a pause said, "I will tie another

one to it." Then there was a long pause; the pipe was perhaps lighted and smoked, and a little conversation was had; then the story-teller began again, and told another section of the tale, ending as before. Such stories were often told in groups of four or six, and might last all night. At less formal gatherings a man might tell a story, and when it was finished might say: "The story is ended. Can anyone tie another to it?" Another man might then relate a story, ending it with the same words, and so stories might be told all about the lodge.

When a sacred story was to be told the people were called into the lodge, the door was closed, and everyone sat quite still. No one was permitted to enter or go out while the narrator was speaking. Playing children were told to keep away, because if any noise were made in or near the lodge, something bad would happen—someone might get sick or die, or might be killed. Sacred stories were told only at night, for if they were related in the daytime, the narrator would become hunchbacked.

BEGGING STICKS

If while the tribe was assembling in the great camp it became known that the Indians of a certain group were coming and were near at hand, the chiefs might decide that on their arrival a feast should be given them. Young men were sent about the camp, each carrying a bundle of sticks, of which one was given to each woman from whom a contribution of food was expected. Each one receiving a stick would furnish some food—meat, bread, coffee, or berries. The women receiving the sticks cooked the food with

apparent pleasure, and, when ready, put it in a clean new dish, combed their hair, and dressed themselves nicely, preparatory to taking the contributions to the feast. From all parts of the camp women were seen going toward the appointed place, carrying the food and chatting gaily with each other.

I have seen several kinds of these sticks. One of them was about fourteen inches long, was painted green, and had a deerskin fringe about the end not held in the hand. Another was twenty or twenty-four inches long, painted blue, with three crow-feathers at the end. Another, about eighteen inches long, painted green, had hawk's down-feathers on the end. Still another, fifteen inches long, was painted red, and was adorned with a bit of fur about the end, from which down-feathers hung. The custom of sending about these sticks at such a time and for such a purpose is very old. Such sticks are merely the counters for the hand game, but in their ornamented form are modern, having been trimmed in this way by the ghost dancers since about 1890. This association gave the sticks a sacred character, hence they were handled reverently.

CONTESTS BETWEEN THE SOLDIER BANDS

Speech-making, storytelling, and conversation were the usual forms of entertainment among the Cheyennes at their more or less formal feasts; but on some occasions feasts were given which were attended by the members of two of the soldier bands, for the purpose of determining which band had among its members the most men who had performed brave deeds.

When a competition of this sort took place, the two bands were ranged on opposite sides of the lodge, facing each other. Those present did not at first speak, except when asked. Some elderly man was chosen to preside, one who had no special affiliation with either party, and so was disinterested. He sat at the back of the lodge with the pipe lying on the ground before him, the bowl pointing to the south. The umpire had already thought over the list of brave deeds to be brought up. Before him were a number of counters, consisting of small sharpened sticks, which he thrust upright into the ground for the purpose of marking what had been related—the points gained by either party.

When all were ready to begin, he passed a counter to the man sitting at one end of the line. The counter

passed from hand to hand until it reached the man for whom it was intended, and then the umpire asked, perhaps, "Which one of you ever counted coup on a man who carried a gun?" If the man holding the stick had not done this, he passed it to his next neighbor; and so it went from hand to hand until it reached one who had done this thing, when he narrated the circumstance, perhaps mentioning the name of some witness to the deed.

Sometimes most unlikely things were suggested by the umpire, as when the stick was passed for a man who, riding a spotted horse, had touched an enemy carrying a gun. Without a word the stick passed from hand to hand until it reached a man on the north side of the lodge, who said: "At such a time and such a place, when riding a spotted horse, I touched a Ute. He held his gun in one hand, and was trying hard to get away."

"Ah," said the umpire—Woman's Heart, a Kiowa,— "that will not do. He must have shot at you." So the stick went on, and no one claimed the deed. When one side had counted a coup, and received credit for it, the stick was passed again to that side. A man who had more than once performed the feat mentioned might ask to have a second or a third stick passed to him, receiving them up to the number of his coups of the kind in question. When the coup had been related, the stick which had been passed for it was returned to the umpire, who thrust it in the ground to his right or left hand, according as the winning was by the party to his right or left.

In case neither side had been able to count the coup suggested, or if both sides had counted it, so that they were even, the stick was passed alternately to one side and the other. After four passings of the stick, someone might suggest that the pipe be lighted, and for a time smoking and conversation followed. The partaking of this pipe was a pledge of the smokers' truthfulness; and the purpose of the pipe lying on the ground before the umpire was also to insure truth-telling. No one would venture to lie or to exaggerate under such circumstances.

After the pipe had been smoked out, the contest began again, and with intermissions for smoking was likely to last all night. Whichever side had the most sticks received a feast the next day from the losing side. Young men who had not done much in war never took part in such a competition. It was participated in chiefly by those who had been to war many times.

WOMAN AND HER PLACE

ON few subjects has there been such persistent misunderstanding as on the position of women among the Indians. Because she was energetic, always busy in the camp, often carried heavy burdens, attended to the household duties, made the clothing and the home, and prepared the family food, the woman has been pictured as the slave of her husband, a patient beast of burden whose toils were never done. The man, on the other hand, was said to be an idler who all day long sat in the shade of the lodge and smoked his pipe, while his industrious wives ministered to his comfort. Most of those who have written of Indian life seem to have comprehended nothing of the strenuous labors of the hunt, and of the warpath, and to have realized not at all that the woman was the man's partner, who performed her share of the duties of life, as he performed his, and who wielded an influence quite as important as his, and often even more powerful.

It is true that the women performed many laborious tasks—tasks that civilized man regards as toil—and that the work done by the men—hunting and going to war—are occupations that civilized man is disposed to regard as sport or recreation; but for this division of labor there were good reasons. The work of providing food and of defense against enemies was hard and dangerous; while fighting and the use of arms were no part of woman's work. As almost everywhere in the world, her share in the life of the community was the care of the household—the welfare of the family. The man's duty was to defend his wife and children, and the tribe at large, in case of an attack, and if the enemies were too strong to be defeated and driven away, at least to fight them off, to hold them in check, so that the women and children might escape by flight.

To fight to advantage, to be in a position to repel enemies that might try to kill his people, a fighting man must be unhampered by a load, and must be light and active, so that he might get about quickly and have an equal chance with the attacking party, who presumably were prepared for war. Chiefly for this reason, the men, carrying only their arms, commonly went ahead, and the women, following behind, looked after the children, bore the burdens, or cared for the animals which transported the camp property. At an earlier day, before the white man had come,

before the Indians had obtained horses, and when enemies were not so often encountered on the prairie, the whole marching camp—men, women, children, and dogs alike—carried loads, apportioned according to the strength of the bearer.

In the Cheyenne camp, as everywhere in the world, the man was the provider, the one who procured the food and most of the material for the needs of life, while the woman bore the children, cared for the home, and thus did her share of the most important work that the Indians knew—the promotion of the tribal welfare. The man and the woman were partners, sharing equally in the work of the family, and often in a deep and lasting affection which each bore toward the other—an affection which, beginning in youth with love and marriage, lasted often to the end of life. I have seen many examples of such attachment, seldom expressed in words, but shown in the daily conduct of life, where in all his occupations the man's favorite companion was the wife he had courted as a girl and by whose side he had made his struggle for success and now at last had grown old.

Among the Cheyennes, the women are the rulers of the camp. They act as a spur to the men, if they are slow in performing their duties. They are far more conservative than the men, and often hold them back from hasty, ill-advised action. If the sentiment of the women of the camp clearly points to a certain course as desirable, the men are quite sure to act as the women wish.

In the severest winter weather, women did not do much at the dressing of robes, but on pleasant days in winter they often worked at that task. A winter camp was usually made at some point where there was abundant timber; and in some sheltered place among this timber the women cleared away the weeds and undergrowth from a considerable space, hung up robes or lodge-skins about it to serve as windbreaks, and building a big fire in the middle, worked about this at their tasks. Such a place was comfortable, almost like the inside of a lodge, except that it was open at the top.

PUBERTY: BECOMING A WOMAN

Family rank, which existed among the Cheyennes as among other Indians, depended on the estimation in which the family was held by the best people. A good family was one that produced brave men and

Woman and Her Place

good sensible women, and that possessed more or less property. A brave and successful man has raised his family from low to very high rank; or a generation of inefficient men might cause a family to retrograde.

The passage of a girl from childhood to young womanhood was considered as hardly less impor-

tant to the tribe than to her own family. She was now to become the mother of children and thus to contribute her part toward adding to the number of the tribe and so to its power and importance.

When a young girl reached the age of puberty and had her first menstrual period, she, of course, told



Unknown Cheyenne woman

her mother, who in turn informed the father. Such an important family event was not kept secret. It was the custom among well-to-do people for the father of the girl publicly to announce from the lodge door what had happened and as an evidence of his satisfaction to give away a horse.

The girl unbraided her hair and bathed, and afterward older women painted her whole body with red. Then, with a robe about her naked body, she sat near the fire, a coal was drawn from it and put before her, and sweet grass, juniper needles, and white sage were sprinkled on it. The girl bent forward over the coal and held her robe about it, so that the smoke rising from the incense was confined and passed about her and over her whole body. Then she and her grandmother left the home lodge, and went into another small one near by, where she remained for four days.

If there was no medicine, no sacred bundle, and no shield in her father's lodge, the girl might remain there; but if she did so, everything that possessed a

sacred character—even the feathers that a man wore tied in his head—must be taken out.

At the end of the four days, her grandmother, taking a coal from the fire, and sprinkling on it sweet grass, juniper needles, and white sage, caused the girl, wrapped in a robe or sheet, to stand over the smoke, with feet on either side of the coal, purifying herself. This was always done by young unmarried women.

For four days a woman in this condition might not eat boiled meat. Her meat must be roasted over coals. If the camp moved she might not ride a horse, but was obliged to ride a mare.

Young men might not eat from the dish nor drink from the pot used by her; one who did so would expect to be wounded in his next fight. She might not touch a shield or any other war implement, nor any sacred bundle or object. A married woman during this time did not sleep at home, but went out and slept in one of the menstrual lodges. Men believed that if they lay beside their wives at this time they were likely to be wounded in their next battle. Women in this con-



Unknown Cheyenne women

dition were careful to avoid entering a lodge where there was a medicine bundle or bag. For four days women did not walk about much. They spent almost all their time in the small lodge.

The owner of a shield was required to use special care to avoid menstruating women. He might not go into a lodge where one was nor even into a lodge where one had been, until a ceremony of purification had been performed. If the woman thoughtlessly visited the lodge of a neighbor, no shield owner might enter it until sweet grass and juniper leaves had been burned in the lodge, the pins removed and the lodge covering thrown back, as if the lodge were about to be taken down. When this had been done, the covering might be thrown forward again, and pinned together. The lodge having been thus purified, the shield owner might enter it.

PROTECTIVE ROPE

The Cheyenne young women and young girls always wore the protective rope, and most of them still do so. This is a small rope or line which passes about the waist, is knotted in front, passes down and backward between the thighs, and each branch is wound around the thigh down nearly to the knee. The wearing of this rope is somewhat confining, yet those who wear it can walk freely. It is worn always at night and during the day when women go abroad.

It is a complete protection to the woman wearing it and is assumed by girls as soon as the period of puberty is reached. All men, young and old, respect this rope, and anyone violating it would certainly be killed by the male relations of the girl. I have heard of one case where a middle-aged man attempted to disregard this protection. The girl and her mother were the only two of the family left, all their male relatives having died. Not long after the attempt was made, the mother and daughter, arming themselves with heavy stones, waylaid the man, took him by surprise, gave him a frightful pounding, and left him for dead. He recovered after a long siege, during which he received sympathy from no one.

COURTSHIP

In the Cheyenne camp, love and courtship and marriage had their place, as they have the world over. In modern times the young Cheyenne lover did his courting in the old-fashioned Sioux manner. When

he became fond of a girl, he went near to the lodge in which she lived, and, wrapped in his blanket or his robe, which was over his head and hid his features, he stood there, waiting for her to come out. When she passed, on her way to get wood or water, or on her return, he stepped up beside her, and threw his arms and his blanket around her, quite covering her person with the blanket. Then he held her fast and began to talk with her. If she did not like this, she broke away from him, and he went away, much mortified; but if she listened to him, he might talk to her for an hour or two—perhaps much longer. If she did not come out of the lodge, he might wait four or five hours, and then go off, to return and try once more.

A girl whose beauty or whose pleasing manners made her popular might have a number of suitors. Often, when a girl had been off with some of her fellows to get wood, or gather roots, or play football, she might find on her return to the lodge several young men standing near it, waiting to talk with her and court her. The young men did this in turn, the first to arrive having the first opportunity. If two or three young men were waiting for her, the first to reach her took her in his arms and talked, and the others stood at intervals toward the lodge door, each awaiting his turn as she came on. The man nearest the door was usually he who talked the longest with her. If only one young man was waiting, he and the girl might sit down by the lodge. Very likely the girl's younger sisters, as well as the young men, were watching for her return, and when the lover threw his arms around the girl to hold her, her young sisters might run up and take the rings off his fingers or the bracelets from his wrists, or might even twitch off one or more of his silver hair ornaments. Whatever they did, he paid no attention to them. All this is borrowed from the Sioux within the last century.

In old times, however, courting was not done in this way. Then, no boy would ever have thought of throwing his arms around a girl. He waited for her, as she was going for wood or water, and as she passed him, plucked at her robe to attract her attention, and stop her. Usually she stopped to converse, but if she did not stop, the young man felt that he had been badly treated and went away, mortified at the rebuff. Sometimes young men did not dare to go as far as to pull at the girl's robe. They stood at a little distance, and whistled or called to her, to endeavor to get her to look at them, in the hope that she would smile, or in some way encourage them to be a little bolder.

When meeting girls in front of the lodge and courting them, young men did not usually talk to the girls of love, but conversed on general topics, giving the news and discussing the affairs of the camp. A young man who wished to ask a girl to marry him did not often put the question himself, but requested some friend to meet the girl and ask her if she would marry him. This is of more modern times. In earlier days some aged friend or relation was sent to convey this message.

In olden times the young people used to wear rings; at first, made by themselves, of horn, and later of metal. Often two young people would plight their troth by an exchange of rings. If a young man wished a girl to marry him and spoke to her about it, she might say to him: "Are you telling the truth? If you are, take off my ring," and she held out her hand. He took the ring and put it on his finger. If he asked her if she was telling the truth, she did the same thing. In this way they promised to marry each other, although some time might elapse before the marriage took place. Sometimes it might not take place at all, but if the girl did not marry the man to whom she was pledged, but married another, the man whose ring she had taken might send someone to ask her that his ring be returned to him, and in such case it was sent back. On the other hand, if the man married another girl—not the one to whom he had given his ring—she who had received the ring might throw it away, signifying that at the same time she threw away both ring and man.

Sometimes, when the young people were talking outside the lodge, a boy might slip the wristlet off a girl's arm and take it home with him. If the girl was willing that he should keep it, she said nothing; but she might go in and say to her mother, "So-and-so took my wristlet and carried it away, and I do not want him." In such a case the family sent a messenger for the wristlet, and the young man gave it up.

A girl was not likely to become engaged to a young man who had not been to war, because of the feeling that one who had not been to war was not yet a man, that is, grown up.

The flute was sometimes played by young men merely for the pleasure of making sweet sounds. Others played it in order to help them in their courtship. Some flutes had a special power to influence girls. A young man might go to a medicine man and ask him to exercise his power on a flute, so that the girl he wanted would come out of the lodge when she

heard it. The young man began to play the flute when he was at a distance from the lodge, but gradually approached it, and when he had come near to the lodge he found the girl outside waiting for him.

LOVE MEDICINES

If a young man fell in love with a girl who did not care for him, he might fill a pipe and take it to a medicine-man who had power in affairs of love, ask him for help, and tell him his troubles. Perhaps the medicine man gave him some spruce gum, used for chewing, and told him that if he could get the girl to chew it her thoughts would constantly be of him. The young man might himself offer the gum to the girl, or might persuade some woman friend, married or unmarried, to induce the girl to take it. If the girl chewed it, her thoughts were certain to turn to the young man, and she thought of him constantly.

The white-tailed deer¹ are powerful in love affairs, and are to be asked for help. Those who have these deer for their helpers wear on the shoulder belt the tail of a deer, with some medicine tied to it. Such ornaments were made for those who have love troubles. Those who understood the deer and its ways taught the young man what to do. In approaching her he should always walk up to the girl on the windward side, so that she might get the scent of the tail and of the medicine. The following story bears on these beliefs:

There was a young man, afterward named Black Wolf, who loved a girl in the next camp, and wished to go to see her. It was some distance away, and two days and one night were required to reach it. The young man asked Elk River's wife to give him some food so that he might stop on his journey and eat.

As he was traveling he came to a ridge, from which he saw a stream running in the direction he wished to go. He went down into the valley, toward the stream, and as he approached it he saw some lodges in a thick growth of willows, and up the creek a large lodge standing near the bank. He determined to go to this lodge, but went down to the stream to follow it up on the ice, for it was winter. As he went along, he said to himself, "The camp is not so far off as I had thought; here it is now."

¹ Timber deer waving—*mā tā' ē wā sī ōm stā sīn' nī*.



Waiting for his beloved, unknown Cheyenne

When he had come near to the lodge he stopped to look at it and to see whose it was. There was a light within, and he saw standing near the lodge young men playing on the flute, as if courting. In the lodge he could hear people playing the finger-bone game. He determined to enter and ask the people there where he should go to find his relatives in the camp. He peeped in through the door and saw within a number of beautiful girls and fine-looking young men, some playing the finger-bone game and some the seed game. Some of the girls had on striped Navaho blankets, and some painted robes—all very pretty. The young men, too, were finely dressed. The young people outside stood about, wearing their robes hair-side out. When he saw all these girls, he felt bashful, and did not go in.

Presently he went around to the back of the lodge to think what he should do. There he stopped and considered, and taking courage, started back to the door, intending to enter; but as he was walking he turned his head, and for a moment looked away from the lodge, and when he looked back, the lodge was



Walking Spirit

not there. Instead of all these beautiful girls and men, there were deer, going off through the timber. He wondered to himself what had happened, and went down through the timber and continued on his way, often looking back and fearing lest something bad might come to him before he could get away.

All night he went on, and near morning stopped, and built a big fire and rested there nearly all day. He pondered so much on what he had seen that he forgot to eat until just before he started on. Night began to fall before he had gone far, and just before dark he saw smokes and heard dogs barking. He knew he must be near the camp and stopped to rest.

That night he went down into the camp, and walked about, looking for some of his people with whom he might stop. As he passed each lodge he stood still listening for a voice that he knew, and at last he found the right lodge and went in. He did not stay there long, but said to his relations, "I have come a long way to see my sweetheart," and went out again. He went about through the camp looking for the girl's lodge, but when he found it, he saw a young man there courting her, and other young men waiting. He stepped back out of sight to wait until some of them had gone away.

When all had gone, he stepped up, and the girl looked at him, and knew him, and said, "Ah, it is you!" and she hugged him. "How did you get here?" she asked. "Did you come out of the sky, or did you creep up out of the earth?"

The young man said, "I came through today"—which was not true. "I thought about you the other evening, and started off to find you. I do not suppose that you have thought much about me."

"Yes," said the girl, "I have thought of you many times. Every time I see the ring you gave me I feel lonely, but I cannot get to where you are; it is too far to go." They kissed each other.

The young man had gone to the camp to give back the girl's ring and to take his own from her. He did this because he was going to war. He did not wish to be killed with the girl's ring on his finger.

Before he had left his own camp an old man had cried through the village that the camp was to be moved to a certain place. The young man waited in the girl's camp so that his own camp might be moved before he returned to it.

After he had been in this camp four days and four nights, he said to the relative with whom he was stopping, "Give me some food for my journey; I think that



Courting couples, drawing by unknown Cheyenne

by this time the camp is moved, and I shall go back there.” They gave him some pounded meat and tallow. He wanted to see his girl again before he started, and that night he went to her lodge and she came out to meet him. He said: “I have come to see you once more. Tonight I am going home.”

“Why are you going home?” asked the girl. “May I go home with you?”

“No,” said he, “I cannot take you now. I am going to war as soon as I reach home. When I return from war I will take you to my camp.” The girl cried.

The young man left her and started. He traveled until he reached camp. After two days’ rest he set out on his journey to war, and before he returned he had counted a coup. After his return they had a great war dance, and danced all night. Elk River gave away a horse, and changed the young man’s name to Black Wolf. He was the father of that Black Wolf who was Brave Wolf’s son-in-law.

From the deer Black Wolf received the power to make any girl fall in love with him. He could put his

medicine on a looking-glass, and flash it on the girl’s eyes, and she would fall in love with him. He was a great man to make flutes for lovers, and wore a white-tailed deer’s tail on a belt which passed over his shoulder. Men who were unfortunate in love used to go to him to get help.

MARRIAGE

A Cheyenne boy was expected to court a girl from one to five years. After he felt sure of her consent, he applied to her parents for theirs, sending either an old man—some friend or relation—or perhaps an old woman—his mother—to ask the girl in marriage. With the messenger he sent the number of horses that he could give. The messenger tied the horses in front of the father’s lodge, and then went in and delivered the message, saying, “Such a young man [naming him] wishes your daughter [naming her] for his wife.” The messenger did not wait for an answer, but at once went away.



Unknown Cheyenne family

Sometimes the father decided for himself whether or not he would consent to the marriage, but at other times he sent for his relatives to talk the matter over and to ask their advice before giving an answer. If this was unfavorable, the horses which the young man had sent were turned loose and driven back to his father's lodge; but if the marriage was acceptable, the girl's father sent her, and with her a number of horses, often greater than that sent by the young man, to the lodge of the young man's father.

The horses sent by the young man stood in front of the lodge of the prospective father-in-law until the question of the advisability of the marriage had been decided. Sometimes they stood there all day. Often not horses alone were sent, but any other presents that the suitor thought might be acceptable. Thus, if the girl had a young brother who was fond of going to war, the suitor might send a war-bonnet, or even his whole war outfit, bow, arrows, quiver, and his war clothes; or even a gun or a six-shooter.

The horses might not stand before the lodge of the girl's father more than one night; that is, twenty-four hours. They must be accepted or sent back within

that time. Thus, there was no long engagement after the boy asked for the girl. The matter was soon decided, and the marriage often took place within twenty-four or forty-eight hours.

A young man who was courting a girl would often try to persuade her to run off with him and be married at once. She would not directly refuse, but would put him off, saying, "No, I cannot do it today; let us wait until some better opportunity occurs." If she had been given to a brother or a cousin to dispose of in marriage, she would be quite sure to reply to such a request, "No, I think too much of my brother—or cousin—to do that."

A girl might receive attention from ten or twelve young men; to be courted by five was very common. Sometimes an elopement actually took place, but in old times not often; usually a girl cared too much for her reputation to do a thing of that kind. Marriage without the consent of the parents and the conventional exchanging of gifts was thus very unusual, and when one took place, the father or brother might follow the couple and bring back the girl. More than once men have been killed on this account.

Woman and Her Place

Sometimes it might happen that horses were sent, and the girl's hand was asked in marriage at a time when her brother was absent from the camp. He had a most important voice as to whether the marriage should or should not take place, and if he were absent, the horses might be returned to the sender, and the young man asked to send them again later. Usually, however, the suitor knew that the girl's brother was absent, and did not send to ask for her at such an inopportune time. He chose the most favorable occasion for getting a speedy and satisfactory answer.

The young man who fell in love with a girl was likely to do everything he could to secure the favor of

the one who controlled her marriage. If a suitor and the girl's brother were together on the warpath, the suitor might roast meat and bring it to the brother, or in various ways might try to make things easy for him. After a time he sent a friend to tell the brother that he loved his sister and wished to make her his wife.

Sometimes a girl who was fond of a man might learn that some other richer suitor was about to propose for her, and to send horses to her father. If she discovered this, she might anticipate the matter by running off with the man she loved. Perhaps then her parents might pretend anger with her, or really feel it, and when they learned of her act might send word



Little Wolf and his wife

Life

to her not to return to their lodge, or might refuse to receive her if she came. In that case she went to the lodge of some near relative, an uncle, aunt, or favorite cousin, and was married from there. After a little

while her parents again became friendly, and the old affectionate intercourse was renewed.

If a man whom she did not love sent horses for the girl, and she loved someone else, her parents



Pretty Nose

would often try to make her marry the man who had offered himself; they talked to her, persuading and commanding her, and might induce her to accept the man against her will. They did not, however, beat or abuse her. In a case of this kind, the girl in her despair might go out and hang herself. At present, however, young people usually solve the problem by eloping; but in old times they did not do this, for an elopement was disgraceful, and was regarded as no marriage. But if, after it had taken place, the boy sent the customary gifts, this made the marriage valid, and the disgrace was wiped out.

Sometimes it might be understood beforehand with the girl's parents that she should run off with the young man. This was informal and unusual, but where a girl loved one man, and her brothers and cousins favored another, while the parents sympathized with the girl, they might encourage her to marry the man of her choice, merely to avoid trouble in the family. In such a case the girl might go off with the young man to his father's lodge.

The next morning the young man's parents were likely to dress the girl finely, put her on a horse, and send her, with other horses and many good presents, back to her father's lodge. When she reached her former home, her father and mother sent for her brothers, cousins, and all her kinsfolk. They came to the lodge, and the men divided the horses among them, while the other presents, dresses, blankets, and so on, were distributed among the women relatives. Then the girl's mother cooked food for a feast, and her father gave away horses to anyone whom he might select, to show that he was pleased with the match. Late in the day, when they were ready to return to the lodge of the young man's father, the girl's male relations would bring horses to take back with her, and the women would bring presents of all sorts, sometimes even lodges. Besides the horses which they brought, young men used to bring many arrows. All these things they took back to the lodge of the young man's father, and they were divided among his kinsfolk.

During the four, five, or six years over which in old times a young man's courtship extended, he seldom or never made direct presents to the girl, but often made gifts to her father. If he returned successful from a war trip, he might drive four, five, six, or eight horses to her father's lodge, and leave them there. While a girl's lover—who was regularly courting her—was absent on a war journey, she might ornament a pair of moccasins, and perhaps a pair of leggings and a robe,

with quills, and when he returned might present them to him, with a horse. This was an evidence of affection and appreciation. She, however, very seldom received a gift from him, unless perhaps a brass ring, or some trifling, inexpensive trinket. If he wished to make a present to her, and so to testify to his affection for her, he made it to her father. The marriage ceremony began when the young man sent his mother, or some other person, to the lodge with horses, to ask for the girl's hand.

To send as marriage gifts for a girl horses just taken from the enemy was the highest compliment that could be paid to the girl and to her family. Sometimes a young man very much devoted to a girl and eager to make a good impression on her family, went on the warpath, took horses and sent them as a present for the girl. A striking example of this took place—probably about the middle of the last century—when Beaver Claws, wishing to marry Elk River's daughter, went off on the warpath, found a camp, from which he took seventy horses, brought them all safely to the Cheyenne camp, and drove them home to Elk River's lodge, where he left them. When he reached his own home, he told his relatives what he had done; that he wished to marry Elk River's daughter, and that those horses about Elk River's lodge were all his, and had been left there by him. The marriage was arranged, in accordance with his hopes. A gift so large as the one made by Beaver Claws was unprecedented, and the memory of the occurrence has lasted to this day.

After it had been determined to return a favorable answer, the horses presented by the young man were at once given to the near and dear relatives of the girl. One might go to a favorite brother, another to an uncle who was very fond of her, perhaps another to a favorite first cousin. Each of these relatives was likely then to catch his best horse and send it to her father's lodge, to go with the horses that were to be sent to the young man. Besides the horses, they usually sent other good presents. It was generally known beforehand that the marriage was likely to take place, and some preparations for it had been made.

The girl was now put on one of the best horses, which was led by a woman not related to her, and her mother followed behind, leading a number of the horses, all of which wore ropes or bridles. The other horses were all led by women. Before they reached the lodge of the young man's father, some of his relatives came out, carrying a fine blanket, which was spread on the ground; the girl was lifted from the horse and

set in the middle of the blanket, and the young men, taking it by the corners and edges, carried her into the lodge. Sometimes, instead of carrying her in the blanket, the horse which she rode was led close to the lodge door; the women ran out from the lodge; the girl dismounted, put her arms about her mother-in-law's neck, from behind; other women took hold of her ankles, and lifted her feet from the ground, and she was thus carried into the lodge without stepping across the threshold. This was all done in silence.

When the girl set out she was dressed in fine new clothing, but after she had been taken into her mother-in-law's lodge, the sisters or cousins of her husband took her to the back of the lodge, removed the clothing that she wore, and dressed her in new clothing they had made, combing and rebraiding her hair, painting her face, and hanging about her various ornaments as gifts.

The husband's mother had of course prepared food, and when the young people had seated them-

selves side by side, she offered it to them. That prepared for the girl was cut into small pieces by the mother-in-law, so that the girl need make no effort in eating.

After the marriage had taken place, the girl's mother began to make up her wedding outfit, and in this work the mother-in-law also took part. The girl's mother usually provided the lodge and most of its furniture, such as beds, back-rests, cooking and eating utensils. Many of the other things, however, were furnished by the uncles, aunts, and other relatives of both the young people. When all these things had been prepared and were ready, the mother of the girl would pitch the lodge—usually somewhere near her own—and would furnish it with all the articles that had been contributed; and then would go to her daughter and say: "Daughter, there is your lodge; it is your home; go and live in it."

Sometimes the lodge was made in advance, and the day before the couple were married was pitched in the



Unknown Cheyenne family

circle, near the home of the father of the young man or woman. If near the lodge of the wife's father, it was set a little back of that lodge, in order that the young man might not see his mother-in-law too often.

After a girl had been married and had gone to her husband's lodge, she might still make use of the protective string for a period of from ten to fifteen days. The husband would respect the string for that length of time, but usually not longer. The Cheyennes say that this custom had the advantage of enabling the newly married couple to get used to each other, to sleeping together. Men tell me that they used to lie awake all night, talking to their newly married wives.

After marriage the young man did his best to support his wife by hunting. All their relatives made them presents, and the young couple usually started in life with a good outfit; but all the presents were made after the marriage.

COURTESY AMONG RELATIVES

The connection between a young married couple and their parents was closer with the girl's parents than with the boy's. If the boy was a good hunter, he strove to supply meat for his father-in-law's lodge; but he seldom or never visited it and of course he never spoke to, or knowingly went near, his mother-in-law. This old custom is now dying out. There are today mothers who live with their daughters.

Since a newly married young man was expected to bring in plenty of meat, he often took two or three extra packhorses to the hunting ground. If he failed himself to kill enough meat, his friends made it a point of honor to see that his horses were loaded. Sometimes when he returned from the hunt, he stopped a hundred or a hundred and fifty yards from his own lodge, and his wife and sister, if he had any, or some of his wife's friends, led the horses to his mother-in-law's lodge, and she took care of the meat. A part of it was cooked and a feast given to his friends, his wife asking some old man to call out the names of the husband's friends, inviting them to the feast. This old man generally sat inside the lodge door.

The owner's wife brought in the food to her lodge from his mother-in-law's lodge and it was cut up before being brought in. This was an act of courtesy between mother-in-law and son-in-law, and creditable to both.

When all the guests had arrived, the owner of the lodge said, "Everything is here; you may eat." Then

the old man directed several of the young men to serve the food. He said, "First put out some for yourselves," for in the helping the dish was supposed to be emptied. Generally a very large portion was handed to the old man first; then, turning to the back of the lodge where the owner sat, the server pulled from the pot and placed on his hand five small pieces of meat and invited the owner of the lodge to step forward. He did so, holding his hands, palms up, stretched out in front of him. The five pieces of meat were put on his right hand at the four compass points and in the center of the palm; then he turned his right hand over on the left palm, leaving the meat on his left hand and made the usual offering to the four directions—*Nīv stān ī vō'*. This was the sacrifice offered and the blessing asked at an ordinary feast. After this was done the people ate.

If visitors came to a village, the old custom was for them to occupy the lodge of some newly married couple, who would give them possession and sleep elsewhere. This was an honor to the visitor.

Among people of good family, indirect courtesies often passed between a wife's mother and her son-



Unknown Cheyenne family



Unknown Cheyenne family

in-law. It was not uncommon for a woman to make a lodge for her son-in-law, ornamenting it with quilled, painted, or beaded linings, pillows, bed-covering, and other furniture. Often a newly married woman had little to do, her mother looking after everything, even to making moccasins for the son-in-law.

Since a man was not permitted to speak to nor even to look at his mother-in-law,² it was usual for her

² A man was also not permitted to speak to his adult sister. While the little children of a family played together until they approached manhood and womanhood, still, young men might not speak to their sisters after the latter had grown up—when they were about fifteen years old. If a man went to the lodge of his brother-in-law to speak to him, or to get some article, and found him absent, he did not address the wife—his own sister—on the matter, but spoke to a child about it. Thus, he might ask a little child—even a new-born babe—in the mother's hearing, for the article which he required; or might give it a message for his brother-in-law. If he came to borrow something, very likely the wife presently took the article and put it down somewhere in his sight, and after a time the man took it and went away. The message left with the child in the wife's hearing was always delivered. The practice continued to old age.

to ride up behind the lodge and slip into it at a time when she knew he was abroad. Nevertheless, a young man sometimes presented—but always through another—a horse to his mother-in-law. This was a creditable thing for him to do, and was an honor to the woman. It happened only among well-to-do people.

A woman might face her son-in-law if she chose formally to present him an ornamented robe. She selected for garnishing a good robe, but one on which the hair was not heavy, for the quills were more easily put on such a robe and the work looked better. The woman spread out the dressed robe, and on the flesh side marked the patterns where the quills were to go. After these had all been put on, she sewed on the final ornaments, which were usually little bits of red cloth. Then she cooked food for a feast, and sent for her son-in-law to come to her lodge, where were gathered all the members of the quilling society. Except these members, no one save the young man might enter. His new robe was spread at the back of the lodge, so that he should sit down on it, and in front of the lodge a horse was tied for him to ride away on; this also was a gift from his mother-in-law. When he entered the lodge door he turned to his right, walked around to

the back, and sat down on the robe, which he drew up over his shoulders. Then his mother-in-law took a coal from the fire, and put it down before him, and sprinkled on it some sweet grass; and the young man, with the robe over his shoulder, bent forward over the coal, and let the smoke arise within the robe and cover his body. This was to give him a good heart—to make him feel happy. After this had been done, the young man rose and went out. He did not eat—the food was eaten by the members of the quilling society, or was taken by them to their lodges, where anyone might eat it.

After an exchange of gifts such as described, the mother-in-law taboo ceased to be in force.

CHILDBIRTH AND INFANTS

When a child was to be born, a woman relative of the father usually made a cradle for it, though some woman not a relative might make one. When the cradle was brought to the lodge and presented, the father perhaps gave a horse to each one who brought a cradle. The mother of the girl to be confined asked certain women to assist at its birth. They—or even a

male doctor called in for the purpose—gave the girl medicine from time to time, so that she might have an easy delivery. The medicine given was the root of *Balsamorhiza sagittata*, called by the Cheyennes *hī tū' nē iss ē' ē yo*, or bark medicine.

When the birth was about to take place, they had a bowl ready in which to wash the child, and a knife—in old times of flint, and later an arrowpoint—was at hand to sever the umbilical cord, which was wrapped once about the finger and cut off short. The child was wrapped in a sheet or cloth, the inner surfaces of the legs being first dusted with powder from the prairie puffball, so that the tender skin should not chafe, and the navel was dried with the same dust.

The child was then put in its cradle. At first it was not allowed to nurse from its mother, but some other woman who had a young child nursed it. The medicine women for four days freed the mother's breasts from the early mammary secretion. During this time the mother was given doses of *mōt sī'ī yūn*, the milk medicine (*Actaea arguta*), to induce a free flow of milk. Four days after birth the child might nurse from its mother.



Beaded baby carrier, Cheyenne, c. 1870



Baby girl of Eva White Cow

At any time after the child had become strong, the father, as already stated, might lead out his best horse, and giving it away with other presents (and perhaps even his war-bonnet), might have his child's ears pierced—not actually, but formally.

It was long the custom that a woman should not have a second child until her first was about ten years of age. When that period was reached, the man was likely to go with his wife and child to some large dance or public gathering, and there, giving away at the same time a good horse to some friend or even to some poor person, to announce publicly that now this child was going to have a little brother or sister. To be able to make such an announcement was a great credit to the parents. The people talked about it and praised the parents' self-control.

Families were sometimes large. Shell's father had ten children, eight by one wife. Shell had eleven children, but was married several times. An old man named Half Bear had four wives and more than thirty children.³ Twins were not uncommon.

Young mothers sang to their babies to put them to sleep, and had many stories which they told to children a little older, with the same purpose. While such stories were being related the little child did not speak, and very likely had fallen asleep before two or three of them had been told. The tales were usually about small animals—about the mice, the little ground squirrels, or the chipmunks. One or two examples will show their character.

This is what a little skunk says:

After the sun goes down I wander from place to place, looking for something to eat. If I find a trail, I follow it, and follow it, looking for something to eat; and I never stop until daylight. When daylight begins to come I look about for a place to lie down. I stop looking for food and lie down for the day. All day long I lie there with my little slim feet and my little long face.

This happened to an old frog:

³ The Cheyennes typically did not take many wives. The largest number I have heard of for one man was five. These were sisters who were married to Crooked Neck. When he was made a chief, he gave three of his wives away, but lived always with the other two. Younger sisters were the potential wives of an older sister's husband, but were not always married to him. Men seldom married a second wife who was not related to the first. When they did so, there was usually trouble, and the first wife was likely to leave her husband.

A frog lived near the stream. She had many children. A snake came swimming down the stream and swam into the frog's house.

The frog was very much frightened, but she said: "Here is my brother come to see us. Brother, here are all your nephews and nieces. They are all named after you." Meantime the snake was looking about, waiting to get a chance to catch one of the children. "I am very glad to see them," said the snake.

The old frog whispered to her children to run. She said to the snake, "I will go out and get a little wood to make a fire." To the children she said, "Run away now; we are in a bad place; we are in danger."

The little frogs all hopped into the stream and swam away and were saved.

An old woman who told such stories might give one or more of them to one of the children in the lodge, after she had told it to the child so often that it knew it by heart and could repeat it. Little girls sometimes told these stories to their parents, and if they made mistakes might be corrected by them until they were letter-perfect in the tales.

DIVORCE

If a man found it impossible to live peaceably with his wife, he might divorce her in public fashion, notifying everyone that he abandoned all rights in her that he might possess. This action was usually taken in the dance lodge at some dance or gathering of his own soldier society, and according to a certain prescribed form. Before he acted the man notified his soldier band of what he purposed to do. At a set time in the dance, therefore, the singers began a particular song, and the man, holding a stick in his hand, danced by himself and presently danced up to the drum; struck the drum with the stick; threw the stick up in the air, or perhaps toward a group of men in the lodge, and, as he threw it, shouted: "There goes my wife; I throw her away! Whoever gets that stick may have her!" Sometimes to this was added, "A horse goes with the stick!" If this last was said, the person who secured the stick received the horse—but not the wife.

If the man threw the stick across the dance lodge at a group of men, each one of them was likely to dodge, or jump to one side, to avoid being hit. If one of them was hit, or was narrowly missed by the stick, other men were likely to joke him, and to say: "Ha! you want that woman, do you? I thought I saw you reach for that stick!"



Daughter of Bad Horse

By this act the man renounced all rights to the woman thrown away, and if anyone married her, the husband might not claim any gift or payment.

To be treated publicly in this way was a dis-

grace to a woman. In any dispute or quarrel that the woman might be engaged in later, the matter was likely to be brought up, and her opponent might say, "Well, I never was thrown out of the dance by the

drum." If by chance a man married a woman who had been thus disgraced, and if they ever wrangled, he was likely to remind her of it. It was not forgotten.

This ceremony occurred but seldom, yet it is still well recognized. Perhaps the last case on the Tongue River Indian Reservation occurred in 1899.

A woman was in no sense the property of the man she married. If a man grew tired of his wife, or for any other reason divorced her, except by the drum, anyone else who married her must settle with the husband, often by paying him what he had given for the woman. If a woman ran off with another man, the latter must pay the injured husband. This usually settled the matter amicably; but sometimes the husband was angry, and might kill the man, or the woman, or both. Or, if the matter was not satisfactorily settled, he might kill horses belonging to his successor, or might injure him in some other way.

If a man stole another's wife, that is to say, either eloped with her or took her after her husband had thrown her away, he was likely to take an early opportunity of sending to the husband an old man carrying a filled pipe. The old man was authorized to talk to the injured husband and to offer him the pipe, telling him to ask for what he wished. If the husband smoked, the matter was settled amicably. The husband might ask for, and would receive, what he regarded as a suitable payment. In a case which occurred in 1877, Roan Bear eloped with another man's wife. Later, when the pipe was sent to the husband, he smoked, and sent back word that he wanted a dog to eat—a woolly dog. This was the valuation he placed on the woman.

If, however, a chief's wife ran away with a man, no one might come to offer him the pipe. His dignity would not permit him to take revenge on the woman, and to receive payment for such an injury would be disgraceful. When the chief decided to overlook the offense, he summoned his soldiers to his lodge, formally filled his own pipe, and smoked there with them. The purpose of this formal act was well understood. The similar conduct of the owner of a scalp shirt is explained elsewhere.

Young girls, as they were growing up, often had a number of horses given them by fathers, brothers, and near relatives. When the girl was married, the horses she possessed remained hers, and were entirely free of any control by her husband. The increase also was hers. Such property she was free to sell or to give away, or to bequeath by will, as she might choose. She might, of course, give one or two or more horses to

her husband, and often did so; but those she retained were her own. There have been, and are, women in the tribe as wealthy, or nearly so, as any men.

The women of the Cheyennes are famous among all western tribes for their chastity. In old times it was most unusual for a girl to be seduced, and she who had yielded was disgraced forever. The matter at once became known, and she was taunted with it wherever she went. It was never forgotten. No young man would marry her. This seems the more remarkable, since the Arapahoes, with whom the Cheyennes have been so long and so closely associated, are notorious for the looseness of their women.

On the other hand, since the marriage tie among the Cheyennes, as with other Indians, is not a strong one, and a man might divorce his wife, either for cause or at his own caprice, there were occasional slips on the part of the married woman, who might divorce her husband by running off with another man.

INFLUENCE OF WOMEN

Among the Cheyennes, as already said, the women have great influence. They discuss matters freely with their husbands, argue over points, persuade, cajole, and usually have their own way about tribal matters. They are, in fact, the final authority in the camp. There are traditions of women chiefs, and of women who have possessed remarkable mysterious powers or have shown great wisdom in council. If in later days the women did not take part in councils, they nevertheless exercised on the men of their families an influence that can hardly be overestimated, and in the councils so frequently held, where only men spoke, this influence of the women was always felt.

In old times women sometimes went to war, not necessarily to fight and take horses, but as helpers; yet many accounts are given of cases in which they have fought, and have struck their enemies. Sometimes women charged and counted coup on the killed. In later days, however, it was unusual for women to go to war; and in modern times they have not taken part in councils. Yet, sixty years ago women went to war, and even in the latest hostilities women occasionally accompanied the men.

Buffalo Hump said to me: "A brave woman down in the south rode with her brother into battle. Her brother's horse was killed, and she stayed in that place and fought where her brother fell. They were at close quarters, and the woman fought the enemy off until

a young man came up and took her brother on his horse and got him away.”

QUILLING SOCIETY

As the Cheyenne men had their soldier and other societies or associations, so among the women societies existed which they felt were quite as important as those of the men. Yet, because the association of a man with men becomes closer and more intimate than any he can have with women, less is to be learned of the women's societies than of those of the men. Nevertheless, some detail has been given me of the ceremonial of one or two of these. There are probably others of which I know nothing.

Some Cheyennes declare that women who have been to war constitute a society, but what ceremony



Using smoother on quills, unknown Cheyenne

there may be connected with it, I do not know. It may be that instead of constituting a society, they constituted a class. It is said that women who have quilled thirty robes are in a group by themselves, as are also those who have made a lodge alone; that is to say, without the assistance of any of their fellows. This would mean the tanning and softening of the hides, their fitting and sewing, and the making of the lodge-poles. Women who had performed these operations were few in number. They were highly respected for their extraordinary achievements.

Of the women's associations referred to the most important one was that devoted to the ceremonial decoration, by sewing on quills, of robes, lodge coverings, and other things made of skins of animals. This work women considered of high importance, and, when properly performed, quite as creditable as were bravery and success in war among the men. The guild of quillers included the best women in the camp. Its ceremony and ritual have been handed down from mythic times.

When a young woman greatly desired some good fortune—as the success of a brother or husband going to war, or the restoration to health of a sick brother or a child, she might vow that if this good fortune came to her, she would embellish a robe with quills for some priest, doctor, or warrior.

Such a piece of work must be done in prescribed ceremonial fashion, and the girl must be taught to perform it by some member of the quilling society who had previously done the same thing. The making and offering of such a robe in the prescribed way secured the maker admission to the society of women who had done similar things. Thereafter she might attend their feasts, and, having herself been taught, might teach others.

The name of this society is *Mē ē nō' īst st*,⁴ which means quillers—those who apply quills to leather. The operation of quilling a robe was something sacred, and the women working at it usually sat at the back of the lodge, as far as possible from the door. No one was permitted to pass in front of them. The woman who was quilling a robe did not take the robe out of the sack in which it was kept. Instead, she pulled from the sack only a portion of the robe she was working on, and thus did not soil the robe. Having in the sack all the articles she needed, she could continue her work without delays. A man might not rest his head against

⁴ *Ēmē ē nī'*, she sews on quills.



Quilled shirt, Cheyenne, c. 1860

one of these robes which was being worked on; if he should do so, a bull might kill him. While working on the robes, the women covered their hands with white clay, or sometimes with burned gypsum, so as to keep their hands from soiling a robe.

The Southern Cheyennes no longer work in quills, because they have none, since there are no porcupines in the country which they now inhabit. Besides quills and grass, they formerly made use of the long, slender, black roots of a plant which grows along the streams in the valley of the Canadian. These they dye, and still

put on canvas or cloth, somewhat as they used to put on quills. Twisted cornhusks, sometimes dyed, have recently been used in ornamentation as tassels. The sinew used in sewing on quills was very fine, and the sewing was wholly under the quills, so that it did not show.

Among the Southern Cheyennes a woman who had quilled thirty robes was supposed by that action to have secured for herself good fortune throughout her life, and was expected to live to old age. The woman who gave me this account explained that it

was because she had done this that she was old, and that a number of her companions sitting about were also old. Among the Northern section a woman who has ornamented a lodge—put stars on lodge covering, decorated door, lining, and back-rests, and a robe for the owner—had done the most important work that a member of the quilling society can do. At all meetings of these quillers, before the food was served it was usual for one old woman after another to get up and tell of the robes she had quilled, just as a warrior would recount his brave deeds.

When a woman who was quilling a robe made a mistake in her work and put on a line of quills in the wrong place, as sometimes happened, the mistake could be corrected only by the performance of a certain ceremony. She must call in some brave man, who counted a coup over the robe, reciting what he had done, where he had done it, and winding up with the statement, "And when I scalped him, I did it in this way." As he said this he passed the blade of a knife under the defective work, cutting the threads and so removing the work. In performing this operation he did not use his own knife, but one kept for this use by the quilling society.

For the ornamentation of clothing, robes, and lodges, porcupine quills, dyed in various colors, were most often used. A certain reed (*Equisetum*) was also employed, as well as the slender black root and a black grass. A few years ago beautiful reed and quillwork was often seen on robes, moccasins, and tobacco pouches. The quills and reeds were then always fastened to the leather with sinew thread. Later, as white men's manufactures became more familiar articles of trade, hawk-bells and red cloth were used to ornament women's dresses, then shells of different kinds, and finally imitation shells of porcelain.

The quillwork and beadwork on the war shirts often consisted of concentric circles—or sometimes a many-pointed star—representing the sun. The patterns on the upper side of a moccasin were often symbolic or pictographic. The design might represent lodges, or rivers, or people going to war. A common checkerboard pattern refers to the lining of the third stomach of a buffalo. This looks like a series of little uncovered boxes—somewhat like a honeycomb, in fact.

Although the tendency among observers is to see a meaning in every Indian design, many of these designs are not always symbolic. Often a woman makes a bead or quillwork design merely because she thinks

it pretty, to satisfy her own idea of beauty. Most women still follow the old designs in their bead-work, but they are not held by the old traditions, and are introducing changes according to their fancy.



Quilled hair ornaments, Cheyenne or Lakota



THE LODGE AND ITS FURNISHINGS

IN primitive days, and in fact up to the time of Lewis and Clark, or the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Cheyennes to a considerable extent occupied permanent villages of earth lodges. We may take it for granted that these were not markedly different in construction from those of other earth-lodge tribes in the Plains country. The Pawnees, Mandans, Arikaras, and Hidatsas, all built houses of similar type; yet, so far as I know, no one has ever seen a Cheyenne earth lodge. We may suppose that these dwellings, the sites of some of which are known, consisted of upright posts set in the ground, that the roofs were constructed of poles, grass, and earth, and that the walls were of sod or soil, piled up to a considerable thickness.

In modern times, however, the Cheyenne lodge has been the ordinary buffalo-skin conical movable shelter so well known by its Sioux term, *tipi*.

During much of the summer and autumn little shelter from the weather was actually needed on the high dry plains of the Cheyennes' prairie home, but in winter and spring, when the weather was bitterly cold and snowy, or very rainy, the buffalo-skin lodge furnished a warm and comfortable home. Such lodges were constructed of the hides of a number of buffalocows, sewed together, and stretched over a conical framework of poles.¹ The beds were ranged around the walls, and a fire burned in the middle. To the poles—all around the lodge among the well-to-do, but at all events over the bed of the man of the lodge—there was tied within the lodge-poles a buffalo cow skin lining, which reached to a height of five or six feet above the ground, and protected the person lying un-

der it from any water which might leak through the lodge-skins or trickle down the poles, and also from any wind that might blow in under the lodge covering. The lining helped the draft in the lodge, and thus added to its comfort. Oftentimes it was highly ornamented with pictographs drawn on it by the lodge owner, or by his friends, or by some young man who painted on it scenes of battle and other adventures representing the deeds of aged men.

The first lodge of modern shape is said to have been suggested by a man who was handling a large poplar leaf, and quite by accident bent it into the shape of a cone—that is to say, of a lodge, such as are used today. As he looked at the leaf it flashed into his mind that a shelter like that would be better than those they then had. He showed it to the people, and they made lodges in the shape of this leaf, and have used them ever since.

The skin lodge, though apparently conical in shape, is not a true cone; the windward side—that opposite the door—being shorter, that is, nearer the vertical than is the leeward side. In other words, the poles on the leeward side are more inclined, because in case of a heavy westerly wind they must offer greater resistance to its pressure. The space of ground covered by the lodge is thus not a true circle.²

The size of the Cheyenne lodge was usually determined by the number of horses possessed by the lodge owner; i.e., by the owner's wealth. If a man had but few horses, his lodge was small; if he had many, it was large. There was a reason for this: Two horses were needed to drag the poles of a big lodge, and one to carry the lodge itself—three horses, therefore, for the transportation of the lodge alone, to say nothing of other property and the members of the family.³

¹ Aged women, still alive in 1915, spoke of a time when the possession of a lodge was the exception among the Cheyennes. The complete and comfortable lodges of modern times were the ultimate development from the windbreaks of undressed hides set up over a framework of poles. It was, they say, only after reaching the Black Hills and procuring long poles that they made their first big lodges. Old women long continued to use the old-time small lodges with short poles.

² Probably as recently as 1830 or 1840 the people used large stones to hold down the edges of the lodge covering. This was done in winter, when they could not drive pins into the frozen ground. This practice explains the stone circles often seen on the prairie. Wherever these circles of stones were found, we may feel sure that there was a winter camp, and frozen ground.

³ I have heard and I am inclined to think that the skin lodge did not very long precede the advent of the horse.

For a lodge of eleven skins, eighteen poles, that is to say, sixteen poles within and two for the wings, were needed. A sixteen-skin lodge required twenty-two poles. The larger the lodge, the more poles were needed. From the great number of poles that they used, it resulted that the Cheyennes had well-stretched, nice-looking lodges. The Northern Cheyenne women declare that an odd number of hides should always be used for a lodge, and that if the number was even the lodge never came right. Lodges of different sizes might require eleven, thirteen, fifteen, seventeen, nineteen, or twenty-one skins. For the sewing of these skins much thread was needed. Each strap of buffalo sinew made a bundle of thread, which was tied up together. For a lodge of eleven skins, four sinews were required; for one of fifteen, seven sinews; for one of seventeen skins, eight sinews. For the purpose of lodge making, the hides of old buffalo-cows, just shedding the winter coat in April or May—were preferred. These hides were supposed to be the easiest to tan, possibly, they say, because the old cows were then thin in flesh, and their hides thicker, and so more easily worked.

On account of the greater ease with which they were dressed, cow-hides were used for lodge-skins and robes, though a bull hide, up to a three-year-old, might be used for a robe. For the rest, bull-hides were used for moccasin soles, parfleches, shields, and other thick and heavy articles.

TANNING, MAKING, AND ERECTING THE LODGE

When a hide was to be tanned for a lodge-skin, the hide was made smooth, and all flesh and gristle removed from the flesh side, but on that side it was not much thinned down. The hair was then taken off, and the hide thinned down with a flesher from the hair side, thus reversing the process by which a robe was tanned. The thinning down was continued until the hide was of even thickness throughout. An experienced woman judged of the progress of her work and determined where further thinning was needed by doubling up the hide and feeling it with the fingers.

The hides were fleshed down quite thin, and were then thoroughly rubbed with the rough surface of the proximal articulation of a humerus where it had been cut off from the shaft. The smooth ball-joint being held in the hand, the flat rough cancelli of the bone roughened the surface of the hide.

When a woman who was preparing to make a new lodge had gone as far as applying the tanning mixture and drying the hides for it, she made a feast and to it invited some of her friends—usually as many as she had skins, or perhaps not quite so many. She already had provided herself with about as many softening ropes as she had hides.

When the friends had come and had eaten, she gave to each one a hide and a rope. The different women took them to their homes, wet the hides again, and on the following day softened them, so that all the hides for the lodge might be finished in one day. This was a friendly service, to be repaid in kind as the occasion arose, and was precisely similar to the old-fashioned community barn-raising, quilting, and corn-husking bees of our ancestors.

When a woman had all her skins tanned, she perhaps also had all her threads made, having been working at them at odd times for some weeks. Sometimes, if behindhand with her thread-making, she might ask one or more of her friends to come to help her. The service was a friendly one, and was not paid for. The woman had long been saving the sinews of the buffalo that the husband had killed, and now with her guest she split these dry strips of sinew, and twisted and pointed the strands. In this way she made many bundles of thread for the sewing of the lodge.

When all the materials had been made ready for the making of the lodge, the woman made preparations for a feast, for she intended to invite a number of women to eat with her, and to help her sew together the skins to make the lodge covering. Among those invited was some woman who was especially skillful as a lodge-maker. This lodge-maker possessed no patterns, but measured and fitted everything by the eye alone.

At dawn of the appointed day, the hostess sent for the lodge-maker, and when she had come, said to her, "I wish you to cut my lodge for me."

"Where are your knife and paint?" replied the lodge-maker. The woman brought out a sharp knife and a whetstone, and some paint mixed with grease, and the lodge-maker painted her own face, hands, and arms, and put on her head, in the parting of the hair, a pile of paint mixed with grease, which she would use for marking the skins.

The two women spread out the skins for the lodge on the ground, as nearly as possible in the shape which they were to assume when sewed together, and the lodge-maker stood over and considered them.



Wife of Turkey Legs, preparing a cowhide

Perhaps she shifted the position of several skins, so as to make a better fit and easier work. Where she wished a piece of the hide cut off, she touched her finger to the paint in the parting of her hair, and marked where the knife should go, much as a tailor marks a garment with his chalk. Perhaps she “tacked” the skins together here and there, not cutting off the threads, but leaving them long. After this was done, a messenger was sent to summon the sewers.

When they came, a meal—their breakfast—was served. After they had eaten, the sewers went to the prepared skins, and sitting down on them, with knives, awls, and thread began to sew with the threads the lodge-maker had left hanging. As the afternoon wore on, the hostess again prepared food, and after a while the women ate. By night the lodge was completed. The last part to be finished appears to have been the bottom, where the most patching had to be done, and where the lodge covering flared out a little

to receive the pins that were to hold it to the ground. The hide at the back and top of the lodge just below the wings—the one to which the pole was tied when the lodge was to be raised—was placed neck up, and two strips of hide were left at its upper edge. Not far below these two strips, the strings which tied the lodge covering to the pole were sewed on. When the lodge was to be raised, the two strips of the hide were wrapped about the pole, and the strings were tightly tied over them. The other hides were placed horizontally, neck toward the door.

When the sewing was finished, the lodge-maker went over the lodge with white clay mixed with water, which was rubbed into the covering—all the women working at it. When this was done, all turned to and put up the lodge, stretching it nicely, and pinning it down tight. The dampening which it had just received enabled them to stretch it well. After this was done, all ate again and went home.



Models of Cheyenne tipis: *Top left:* Bushy Head; *Bottom left:* Bull Rib; *Top right:* Little Chief; *Bottom right:* Shining Belly

The lodge-maker herself, if a good-natured woman, of kindly disposition, sewed on the wings, and made their pockets. If she did not possess the proper temperament, another woman was chosen for this task. If the wings and pockets were sewn by a wrangling, fault-finding woman, the lodge, it was said would always be smoky. The lodge-maker sewed on the strips at the back of the lodge, where it was to be tied to the pole. She received a present—a pair of moccasins, a robe, a blanket, a wooden bowl, or what not. The sewers received nothing except the feast, but

any one of them at any time, was likely to call on the hostess for a similar service.

New lodge-poles had perhaps been made for the new lodge, or sometimes old poles were used; a new lodge did not necessarily have new poles. Some women made the lodge covering first, and then got out the new poles for the new lodge; others made the poles first. Lodge-poles were cut at the season when the sap was in the tree, and the poles were easy to peel. When this time came the camp moved up into the hills, and those who needed new lodge-poles secured

them. If, by any chance, the lodge, when first put up, did not quite fit, or failed to sit well on the poles, it was altered when next taken down.

The people at large knew that a certain woman's lodge was to be made, but no one of the various lodge-makers knew that she was to be called on this particular occasion, nor did the sewers know that they were to be invited, until the time had come.

Even the largest lodges were approximately circular at the base—though actually they were oval—longer from door to back. A part of the old, worn-out lodge covering was cut up for clothing and other purposes. Sometimes the lower part of an old lodge was used as a lining for a new one. Old men used it for leggings; women made sacks of it for carrying meat.

In olden times, at the making of some specially painted lodges, the lodge covering, after being painted, was spread out where everybody in the camp might walk over it. This was believed to drive sickness away from the camp. On such occasions the women took their little children by the hand and walked over the lodge covering. If the ornamented pieces of hide representing stars were to be sewed on such a lodge, they were put on as soon as the painting was finished, and in some cases a man counted a coup as each one was sewed in position. Usually four stars were put on, and four coups counted. The day after this was done—the paint thus being allowed to dry—the lodge was spread out in a narrow place between two sand-hills, where people were likely to pass, and an old man rode about the village and shouted out that it was desired that everyone should walk over that lodge. This was done over the lodge of old Half Bear, who was the keeper of Issiwun and the father of Coal Bear, who died about 1896.

In making the lodges for the hat (*Issiwun*) and for the arrows (*Mabuts*), and perhaps the lodges of the Contraries,⁴ a special ceremony was performed. After the lodge-skins had been fitted, but before the sewing had begun, a warrior, chosen from among certain invited men who were sitting about the skins spread out upon the ground, rose to his feet, walked over the skins, and as he did so counted a coup. Until this had been done, the women might not walk over the skins and sew them.

Whenever a new lodge was made and set up, and was ready for occupancy, it must be ceremonially

treated before it might be entered by persons generally. The women who were erecting it passed in and out, but no one else. The ceremony was performed by some man who had killed an enemy in the enemy's lodge. To this man, and to other brave men, a feast was given by the lodge owner.

On an occasion when I saw this ceremony performed, Little Bear was chosen to count the coup and to dedicate the lodge. After the lodge had been set up and prepared, the women all drew back, and Little Bear, with a number of the old brave men, advanced toward it. Those accompanying him stopped at a little distance from it, and stood or sat in a wide half-circle. Little Bear, holding in his hand a small stick, walked to the door, and struck the lodge on the left-hand (south) side of the door, and about halfway between the ground and the door's apex. Then facing toward the spectators, he said: "We started on the trail after Utes. All were mounted—a large party. Poor Bull and Big Bow [Kiowas] were with us. About the middle of the day in the Raton Mountains [in New Mexico] we overtook the enemy. They were in camp—five lodges of them. We charged upon them, and I rushed to the lodge on the left hand. Just before I reached the door, a Ute put his head out, and I stabbed him with my lance. We scalped him. Besides this, I took some horses." When he had said this, he turned about and entered the new lodge. The other men then rose and followed him in; first the more important ones, Little Chief, Man Above, Long Neck, Man On The Cloud—all the bravest men. The other less important men went in afterward. Man Above was said to have killed sixteen Indians in war, besides some white men.

THE FIREPLACE

The fireplace in the Cheyenne lodge is usually roughly rectangular—an oblong excavation in the earth, longer from east to west, and six to eight inches deep. Sometimes it is shaped like a half-moon, and sometimes like a heart. In the southern country it is not surrounded by stones—perhaps because there stones are extremely scarce.

A fireplace is sometimes dug somewhat in the form of an equal-armed cross, the arms pointing in the four cardinal directions (*nivstanivoo*). This term is constantly used for the four directions, and in making a sacrifice with the five pieces of meat, held up to the east, south, west, and north, and to the sky, and then

⁴ Editor's Note: See chapter on "Contraries and the Contrary Lance," p. 167.

placed on the ground at the edge of the fire.

In offering to the cardinal directions, certain poles of the lodge represented them—the one immediately to the south of the door, the three which were tied together to support the frame of the lodge, and the back pole. The pole at the south of the door represented the east; the first, second, and third tied poles, the south, west, and north, in that order; while the back pole, to which the lodge covering was tied, represented the sky. These different supporting poles stood in the general direction of the cardinal points, while the back pole supported the lodge, which to those within represented for the time the overarching sky. The Cheyennes, like some other tribes, regard the earth's surface as flat, and the sky as a huge arched vault which bends down to meet the earth. It is a covering or shelter, just as the lodge is a covering. The conception is not novel.

PAINTED LODGES

In modern times most Cheyenne lodges were not painted. The hat and the arrow lodges were painted black below and red above—whether symbolizing the two colors of the arrow-shafts, or the night and the day, is uncertain. The lodges of the Contraries were painted red. There were some exceptions, as below, but as a rule the lodges were plain.

In old times a few of the Cheyennes had painted lodges. The lodge of old Yellow Wolf, killed at Sand Creek in 1864, was painted yellow, I am told. On the lodge covering, to the north and again to the south of the door, were painted two buffalo-bulls, each about two feet high, standing head to the door, and following each bull were several cows. At the back of the lodge, three feet or more from the ground, was a red disc, perhaps two-and-a-half feet in diameter—the sun—and over this, and just below the smoke-hole, was the morning star, a green disc about ten inches in diameter. Above the door was a blue crescent moon. The wings and top of the lodge were painted black, representing the night, with equal-armed crosses, indicating stars, on the wings. Yellow Wolf was the chief of the Hevataniu. His son was Red Moon—really Red Sun—named for his uncle, Red Sun, a younger brother of Yellow Wolf.

Old Red Sun's lodge was yellow, and above black, like his brother's. The stars on the wings were green. The morning star was green, and about ten inches in diameter. Toward the four directions (*nivstanivoo*)

stood four men. Each had two horns on his head, and instead of hands and feet had wolf-paws, and held in his hands a pipe, bowl up. From the center of the red sun at the back two buffalo-tails hung down. The disc was about three-and-a-half feet in diameter. The crescent moon over the door was green, and very large, perhaps two-and-a-half feet in diameter. Old Owl Man painted these lodges as described. After they were painted, four days and four nights were devoted to dancing.

Old Spotted Wolf had a painted lodge, which he was advised to make by the buffalo, in a dream. A great snake-like animal was painted all about the lodge, the head being on the left side of the door, and the tail on the right. Close above the body of the snake, as if looking over it, appeared about forty-five buffalocow heads. A night owl was painted on either side of the door, a crescent moon over the door, a sun on the back of the lodge, and a crescent moon also at the back, just below the smoke-hole and over the pole to which the lodge was tied. Below the half-moon at the back of the lodge the constellation "seven stars"—the Pleiades—was painted.

The painting of the lodge scarcely ever went out of the group. A man might present it to his daughter's husband, who because of his marriage had come to live with the group to which she belonged.

To the ends of the wings, and sometimes to the ends of the lodge-poles, were often tied pieces of the skin which carries the long hair from the fore-leg of the buffalo. Holes were burned in the ends of the lodge-poles, and the hide attached to the ends with deerskin strings. When, as was sometimes the case, every pole in the lodge was so ornamented, it looked at a little distance as if a crow were perched on each lodge-pole. Such an ornament is called a *nim'hōyōh*, meaning "over the smoke" (plural, *nim'hōyūn*).

MOVING THE LODGE

In ancient times, when the people moved, they carried on their backs all their possessions, including the smallest children and their food. This was before they had dogs to help them. In the old-time dresses the shoulders were always naked, and carrying these heavy loads must have been hard, for the lines must have chafed their shoulders. To transport the meat to the camp a hide was cut in several pieces, and in each piece was packed as much meat as a man or a woman could carry. The hide was laced up, and the pack was



Sweet Taste Woman with horse travois

put on the back, and held there by straps passing over the head and chest. In winter, however, they tied up their belongings in bundles, put them on a dried hide, and walked along, dragging the hide, which was thus like a loaded sled.

Strong Left Hand was told that when dogs were first seen they were wild on the prairie and were of different colors. This dog was different from the wolf, and seemed an animal that might be easily tamed. Sometimes the people fed the dogs, going out near to them and holding up a piece of meat so that they might see it, and then putting it on the ground and leaving it. The dogs would come up and eat it. In that way they began to grow tame, though at first very timid. At length, when a dog saw a person coming with a piece of meat, it ran up to him and wagged its tail, for it knew it was to be fed. Finally, they put strings on the dogs and led them into the camp. This happened long, long ago. After they got dogs these increased very fast. After they had many dogs it occurred to someone that the dogs might carry some of their things, so the dogs became a help to them in their moving, and a large dog was valuable. *Hötäm'* means a full-grown dog.⁵

⁵ Elk River (born about 1810) described these dogs in more detail: "These dogs, though big, were not like wolves. They

On the travois hauled by the dogs were packed chiefly small articles, the small lodges, and sometimes the children. Usually the dogs were led by the women, so that runaways were infrequent. These early dogs are said to have been so large and strong that one of them could haul two children on a travois. In more recent times, the packhorse replaced the dog as the primary means of transportation.

HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE

Important among the furniture of the Cheyenne lodge were the back-rests and the mattress, which together made up the formal lodge bed. Both these were made soft and comfortable by coverings of well-tanned buffalo-ropes and other skins, and formed easy lounging and sleeping places.

were of different colors—black, white, yellow, and spotted. They had long bodies, and feet that turned out, though not like the little dogs of today that have crooked feet. Sometimes today one sees a dog built like these old-time dogs, though much smaller. They had these large dogs until after I was a young man. They were a great help to women in getting wood. Some women had ten or twelve dogs, and packed them all, for they carried packs on their backs, besides hauling the travois."

The mattress—if it may be so called—seven or eight feet long and four feet wide, was formed of willow rods almost as thick as a man's forefinger, strung on long lines of sinew, and was thus flexible and could readily be rolled up. Its use was to keep the bed raised above the soil or to smooth out the inequalities of rough ground.

On the mattress were often spread mats woven of a certain bulrush or tule known as *mō ūm' stāt* (*Scirpus nevadensis*). These mats were loosely woven and were in general use, for the plant grows abundantly in wet places. In modern times, since the introduction of the gunny-sack, which also is constantly used as a foundation for the bed, the gunny-sack is called by the name applied to this rush. The name "pretty plant" refers to its smooth and graceful shape.

The mattress and back-rests were not commonly used during the march, but when a permanent camp

was made, the domicile was arranged as neatly and comfortably as might be.

At such a permanent camp, after the lodge had been pitched, the women usually cleared away all the grass, sagebrush, or roots, on the ground it covered, lowering the surface of the soil two or three inches, except for a border four or four-and-a-half feet wide, all about the walls of the lodge, slightly higher than the general surface of the lodge floor. On this little bench the beds were spread. The earth removed by the women with knives, hands, and spoons, was piled on a blanket or a parfleche, dragged outside, and emptied on the prairie. After this soil had been removed, a slightly deeper excavation was made in the very middle of the lodge, to form the fireplace.

This left the lodge floor—in dry weather, and in certain soils—very dusty, and the dust was laid with water freely sprinkled about, either from spoons or



Interior of tipi, Lame Deer, c. 1908

from the mouth. This wet soil was then walked over and patted down, and when partially dried was swept and the dust thrown into the fire-place. The women and children then went off up and down the creek, and returned with great bundles of rye grass, which they spread on the little bench that was to hold the beds. On the rye grass the mattresses were unrolled and spread. Before this, however, the lodge lining had been tied to the lodge-poles and extended as far as it would go around the lodge. It covered the bed of the lodge owner at least, and very likely the couches of the women and children as well. Tied to the poles at a height of from four to five feet, the lining was brought down inside the poles and parallel to the lodge covering, and then turned in toward the fireplace, so that when the beds were put down they rested on its turned-in border. In this way, any wind which blew under the lodge covering and into the lodge never directly reached the persons sitting on the beds, but was deflected upward by the lining, passed over the heads of the occupants, and then descending, furnished draft for the fire.

If several mattresses were put down in the lodge, they were spread in their proper places, perhaps four feet distant from each other, and between the head and foot of the two mattresses was set up a tripod of slender, usually painted, poles tied together near their tops with strings passing through holes burned through the ends. Sometimes these supports of the back-rest had four legs instead of three. These were spread, and from two of the three poles, above where they were tied together, were hung two back-rests, one for each bed. These were supported by the tripods, and the vacant spaces between back-rests formed convenient cupboards for storing household articles. This was repeated between each two of the mattresses, so that each mattress had a back-rest at its head and one at its foot. In the lodge of a well-to-do person, there were likely to be not fewer than six such back-rests. From the tripods which supported each pair was usually hung by the head—either by a slit cut in the robe or by a loop sewed to it—a buffalo-robe which reached down over the whole back-rest and onto the bed, forming a comfortable seat. On the mattress were spread two or three robes.

The back-rests were formed of slender willow shoots strung on sinew. The shoots were much smaller than the rods used in the mattress, and the back-rest was usually not less than eight feet in length. At the

top, where it hung from the tripod, it was often not more than eleven inches wide, but below this, toward the bed, the willow shoots became constantly longer, until finally, five or six feet from the top, they were perhaps three feet two inches in length. From this point on, the width increased very slightly. The leather loop for hanging the back-rest over the tripod was often one-and-a-half or two inches wide, and was strongly fastened to the upper part of the back-rest. Sometimes this loop was nicely beaded or ornamented with quills. Back-rests were often painted; there might be a dozen shoots without painting, then a dozen painted red, and so on alternately. In later days the ends of the twigs on both sides were sometimes bound with red or blue cloth, with a beadwork edging, and no doubt in earlier times deerskin bearing quillwork may have been used in the same way.

When prepared for transportation, mattresses and back-rests alike were rolled up into compact bundles and lashed with strings, so that they would carry well on a horse. We may imagine that these devices for comfort are of comparatively modern invention, since it is inconceivable that in the days when the Indians were foot travelers and carried most of their possessions on their backs, they would load themselves down with luxuries such as these. The acquirement of the horse by the Indians of the plains meant a literal lightening of their burdens.

In the vacant spaces between the back-rests, and in the narrow intervals between the edges of beds and the lodge lining, were stored practically all the lodge furniture and the extra food that had been laid up against a possible season of scarcity. This food for the greater part was in the form of dried meat, though there might be sacks of pounded meat, of dried corn, dried roots, and fruit. In times of plenty, when buffalo were abundant and many were killed, the women dried great quantities of meat, and on the day following a successful hunt the camp was red with meat and white with sheets of backfat, hanging on the drying scaffolds. When the meat exposed to sun and wind had become hard and black, it was taken down and crushed flat, and put away in parfleches, in which it was carried about from place to place.

In parfleches also the women carried sacks of dried berries and dried roots, gathered during the proper seasons and kept for use during the winter and spring; and in others were ornaments, wooden bowls and dishes, small horn spoons, and any odds-



and-ends. In fact, the contents of a parfleche were a perpetual surprise, for it might contain anything from an elk's tooth to a twenty-dollar gold piece.

Parfleche is a trapper French term of the Old West to denote several different things. Originally it meant a shield—Fr., *parer* and *flèche*, to ward off, or parry, an arrow. The shield being made of rawhide, the term grew broader in its significance, so that a parfleche might be any rawhide, and finally any article made of rawhide. The so-called parfleche in which the women carried their articles was, in fact, the Cheyenne trunk. Made from heavy buffalo rawhide from which the hair had been removed, it was so cut as to be from two to three-and-a-half feet long and from a foot to eighteen inches wide, when folded. The oblong piece of rawhide was folded over for from nine inches to a foot on each side, the long way of the piece of hide, and then at both ends, at right angles to the first fold, for a foot or fifteen inches, so that these ends almost met. Leather strings laced together the two ends, and the shape of the case was convenient for packing on a horse's back. It suggested in its shape and appearance a letter envelope and was somewhat distensible, so that many things might be put in it. Originally made from the untanned hide of the buffalo, these parfleches were in later days made of the hides of domestic cattle. Often they were more or less elaborately ornamented by painting in straight lines and triangles. Women expended much effort in making and in keeping them clean and freshly painted. When a woman was looking for something that was not easy to find, she might drag out from between or under the beds half a dozen parfleches, one after another, to be unlaced and its contents picked over in the search for the missing article. A more or less cubical parfleche, shaped like a trunk, was sometimes seen. This is perhaps a survival from their earlier eastern range near the Ojibwas, who used birch-bark containers of the same form.

Other receptacles used for holding women's things were what trappers used to call "possible sacks"; that is to say, sacks which might hold almost anything—one's "possibles," or small articles. These were commonly made of tanned deerskin, eighteen inches long by fifteen inches deep, often rounded, though sometimes square at the corners below, the opening above being covered by a long flap which tied down with leather strings. Such possible sacks were often elaborately adorned with porcupine quills, dyed horse-hair, conical tin ornaments purchased

from traders, and various other articles. In them were carried small ornaments; a multitude of little sacks, as those containing medicine, or sewing articles, or counters in some game of skill or chance, baskets and ornamented plum-stones used in the seed game, and many other things. Clothing for small children was packed in such sacks, and generally they were used to keep together in one package small articles that would be difficult to find if put loose in a parfleche.

At present the only basket used is the one for playing the seed game. This was made sometimes of grass, or of split willow twigs, or of split strands of yucca. Often it was made of the roots of the young red-willow (cornel), which were dug up and soaked in water for a long time. The root stems were scraped down till all were of the same size. A single slender shoot of red-willow runs up spirally around the basket, and the roots were woven over this back and forth, covering the shoot. If a single shoot was not long enough, another was added.

Although at present they manufacture only these baskets, the women were formerly expert basket weavers. As recently as the middle of the nineteenth century all women wove baskets from a certain grass (*Eleocharis*). These were of varying sizes and were used for different purposes. A very small basket was often fastened at the head of the baby-board as a shade for the baby's face. Small baskets were used for dishes, and large ones as burden baskets, to carry on the back. Mothers made tiny baskets as playthings for their children.



Quilled and beaded possible sack, Cheyenne

Opposite: Parfleche, Cheyenne, c. 1875

CLOTHING, ORNAMENT, HAIR

THE early clothing of the Cheyennes was made from the dressed skins of animals. For women's dresses, and for leggings and the upper part of the moccasins, the skins of the deer, antelope, or mountain sheep were used. Such skins were smoked before being made into clothing, so that the garment might be easily softened after being wet. The leggings of old men, and the dresses of older women, were usually made from buffalo cow skin, and for this purpose old skins that had served as the upper part of lodge coverings were often employed. Such skins had been thoroughly smoked, and were always very soft and durable.

The Cheyenne women were good tanners of buffalo skins, and many of them tanned deerskin well. When tanning the skins of deer or antelope, or of mountain sheep, the most skillful were careful not to break into the epidermis when they removed the hair. In this way their deerskins had a smooth, even surface. A deerskin that was very thick might be thinned down, and so made rough, on both sides. Such a skin would be used for the uppers of a moccasin, but not for leggings, shirts, or tobacco pouches.

SEWING

There was a time when the art of sewing was not known, and when the dresses of women, like the leggings of men, were tied together at the seams with leather strings, passed through holes in the edges of the front and back pieces of the dress. The dresses of old Suhtai are said to have been so made as late as 1850-1860. In modern times all clothing was neatly sewed at the seams with sinew thread, which was very durable. Such thread was made from the sinew lying either side of the dorsal spines of the buffalo. It was taken off in long pieces, or straps, and dried, and strands of it were split off with the finger nails as needed by the women, then moistened in the mouth, rolled on the knee with the palm of the hand, and pointed for an inch or two from the end. With an awl a hole was made in the leather, the fine point of the thread was passed through the hole, and pulled tight with the fingers.

The awls used in early times were the spines taken from the side of the head of large catfish, which were strong and very sharp-pointed; or were tough thorns; or were pieces of bone, sharpened to a fine point.

When metal came into use, awls and needles were among the earliest implements traded to the Indians; but we may imagine that so long as they used leather for clothing, the use of the needle as such never made any great progress among them, but that it was employed as an awl to make the hole, and that the sewing was done in the old-fashioned way. In later times, the slender piece of sharp-pointed metal used as an awl was commonly set in a wooden handle, four or five inches long, or in a handle made of the ligament from the back of the neck of some large animal, dried to the hardness of horn or bone. A worn-out knife-blade was often ground down to form an awl.

A thread used in the old days, before they discovered the possibilities of sinew for sewing, was the twisted bark of a certain plant, possibly a milkweed. This weed grows from four to six feet tall and has a stem about as thick as a man's finger. When ripe, it bears on the top two nearly spherical pods which contain something like cotton. Thread made of this bark was tough and useful.

As the women were the manufacturers of the clothing, they carried the articles for sewing. These were the awl and sinew, together with porcupine quills, dried black grass, and fine roots, which they often used in decorating the tanned skins. All were carried together in a little sack or case, usually made of dressed buffalo cow or calfskin, with the hair left on, which was tied to the belt. Such sewing cases opened at the top with a covering flap, and were often ornamented about the edges with a sort of binding of porcupine quills. The flap was tied down by a deerskin string, which met another string from the side of the case.

The porcupine quills, which (because of their extreme sharpness and their way of working through or into almost anything with which they came in contact) could not be carried loose, were always wrapped up in a little case made of the pericardium of the buffalo. Sometimes also the awl, if small enough, was put in this case, to render its point harmless.

MOCCASINS

The moccasins of modern times were of deerskin, the upper commonly cut in one piece, with a single seam at the back, and to the lower border of this upper was sewed the parfleche sole of buffalo-hide. In making moccasins the sole was sewed to the upper from the inside, so that when the sewing was completed the moccasin was inside out. The seam at



Beaded moccasins, Cheyenne, c. 1845

the heel, however, was not yet sewed. The moccasin was turned right-side out with a stick, and the heel was then turned down, sewed from the inside, and turned back. The beading, porcupine quillwork, or other ornamentation, was put on the upper before it was sewed to the sole.

In ancient times the moccasin was made differently. There was one large piece, comprising what is now the upper, with a flap which passed across under the whole sole of the foot, and was sewed to the other side of the upper by a single seam. After this was completed, the parfleche sole was sewed on the outside. People now say that these moccasins were more comfortable and much more durable than those more recently in use. Almost always the moccasins of modern times have two little tails of deerskin, an inch or more long and an eighth of an inch wide, which project backward from the heel, at the point where the heel seam joins the sole. In old times it was not uncommon for a woman to sew to the heel of each of her husband's finer moccasins a buffalo-tail, or a strip from the beard of the buffalo, which trailed behind him as he walked.

Summer moccasins are without ankle flap, but those for winter have a loose piece about the foot opening, three or four inches wide, behind and at the

sides of the ankle, which is drawn up and around the ankle, and tied, to keep out the snow. For very cold weather the Cheyennes sometimes used hair moccasins; that is to say, soleless moccasins, made from old buffalo-ropes, the hair side in. These were a great protection against cold.

Beads, fringes, porcupine quills, and the little conical metal ornaments, so common in the old Indian trade, were used to adorn moccasins. If there was a row of tin tinklers on the moccasins, they were worn on the outside of the middle line of the foot, running from the instep nearly, or quite, to the toe.

The modern moccasin with the parfleche sole is no doubt of recent development among the Cheyennes. In ancient times, when they lived in the humid timbered country of Minnesota, and farther east, their moccasins, as described to me, were like those of the woods Indians of today, made of a single piece of deerskin and without a sole. It was only after they had come out on the high dry plains, where the cactus grows, that the need was felt of a foot-covering that would resist the thorns. The change of footgear may have come about within the last three hundred years. The old Suhtai moccasins, as described, were seemingly of a style midway between the earliest moccasins and those of modern times.

LEGGINGS AND BREECHCLOUTS

Men's leggings were of the usual plains type; that is to say, they reached from the ankle nearly to the crotch on the inside of the leg, came up somewhat higher on the outside, and were tied to the belt, over the hip, by a long strip of deerskin. Usually they were fringed, and often were cut in what is called a "fork"; that is, there was a long, loose, triangular piece of deerskin on the outer side of the leg, running from the calf to the ground. As a man walked, this piece flapped forward and backward. Leggings were sometimes beaded, but usually the ornamentation was attached to the fringe, and might consist of shells, elk-teeth, the spurious hoofs of the buffalo, buttons, bits of chain, large beads, or anything that took the wearer's fancy.

Until recently all the older Cheyenne men wore the breechclout, which they still appear to regard as a sign of sex. Among the Northern Cheyennes, until about 1900, all still wore the breechclout under the trousers, and the string about the waist, next to the skin. They said that if they took that off they would lose their manhood. Apparently the string about the waist, on which the breechclout hangs, is as important as the breechclout itself, or perhaps the string may represent the whole article. Little boys, as soon as they can walk, have the string put upon them, and wear it constantly but wear no breechclout. Among the Southern Cheyennes I believe that this practice has passed out of use to some extent, but it prevailed much longer among the Northern people. Just before his death in 1904, it was said of Old Little Wolf that he was the only one in the camp who commonly left off the breechclout when assuming trousers.

SHIRTS AND DRESSES

Deerskin shirts were a part of the ceremonial war clothing of the men. These had sleeves, were commonly fringed, and reached halfway to the knees, thus passing over the tops of the leggings. They were made of the skins of deer and also of antelope or mountain sheep. Such war shirts were trimmed along the seams with the scalps or hair of enemies, and elaborately ornamented with beads; or, in earlier times, with porcupine quills.

The woman's dress consisted of a smock or shirt made of the skins of deer, sheep, antelope, or elk, reaching from the neck halfway from knee to ankle. The sleeves were like a cape, open below, and hung



Beaded leggings, Cheyenne, c. 1875

down to the elbows. Often there was a cape from one sleeve across the back to the other sleeve. Women wore moccasins, also leggings pulled on over the moccasins and tied under the sole of the foot, and reaching up to and tied below the knee. Hanging down on the outer side of each leg, and reaching nearly to the ground, was a leather string—nowadays sometimes a narrow strap, which may be ornamented at the ends with brass-headed nails. These were the garters with which the leggings were tied below the knees. Tied about the thighs and waist they wore a sort of clout; and at night the protective string (*nibpihist*) was used, as elsewhere described.

Women's dresses of the olden time were ornamented with elk-tusks, and the capes with stained porcupine quills. One hundred elk-teeth used to be worth a good horse. A dress thus ornamented would sometimes weigh ten or twelve pounds. I once counted on a single dress between 900 and 1000 elk-teeth.

The buffalo robe was worn by both sexes. The head was on the left side of the body, the tail on the right side.

SUHTAI DISTINCTIVE DRESS

Old people have told me that from 1845 to 1865 many Suhtai still lived in the camp and practiced their old-time ways.¹ Their clothing differed somewhat from that of the Cheyennes. The men did not wear breech-clouts, but wore flaps hanging from the belt in front. The men's leggings were made each one from a whole deerskin, drawn tight about the leg above the knee but very loose below, folded over double in front, and tied behind in a bow-knot. The moccasin was sewed on one side only, being all in one piece, with a parfleche sole sewed on outside.

The woman's dress in front came up to the chest, and then the skin of the dress was turned over and hung down in a flap. At the left shoulder the material of the dress was gathered in a bunch, and a strip of skin passed over that shoulder, to support the dress on that side. The arms and shoulders were bare. The Suhtai women did not sew their dresses, but tied them together at the sides with strings.

Short Old Man, one of the last of the Suhtai, wore the Suhtai flap and leggings, and his wife wore a buffalo-skin dress painted red. The man wore his hair rolled up on his head and coiled in a peak on his forehead; his wife wore her hair loose. They painted themselves with old Indian earth paint, and never used the new colors that the Cheyennes traded for at Bent's Fort. Their ways must have been notably different from those of most of the Cheyennes, for old people now relate that as very little children they used to run away from these Suhtai through fear. The man carried a quiver of buffalo-skin. His left arm was cross-scarred from wrist to shoulder, showing where he had removed strips of skin in sacrifice.

ORNAMENTS

In the first half of the last century, silver plates were used as hair ornaments. Silver coins, ranging in size from a dollar to a dime, were hammered out thin, and a number of these, of varying sizes, were attached to

¹ Since the Suhtai existed as a separate tribe up to 1831, we may assume that not a few of the original tribe members survived up to the year 1870 or later; and in accounts of fights between white troops and Cheyennes, we sometimes read of the killing of old men or women whose dress suggests that they were of the original Suhtai. Such a woman was killed at the fight of Summit Springs in 1869.

the scalp-lock with deerskin strings, passing through holes in the center of each silver disc. The largest coin was above and the smallest below. At a later time, similar ornaments of German silver for this use were imported by traders. Men's side-braids were commonly wrapped with bands of otter-fur, and sometimes with brass wire. The braid was tied at the end with a little deerskin string. Frequently a small strand of the forehead hair, on the left side, was drawn down over the left eye, and wound with brass wire to which a few large beads were sometimes attached. Often a stone arrowpoint with a little deerskin bundle of medicine was tied to a man's scalp-lock. After the introduction of domestic cattle, some men wore cow-tails tied to the scalp-lock, and later still to their hats.

Eagle-feathers were commonly worn in the hair by older men, and down feathers of the eagle were often tied to the head at the base of the scalp-lock. There is now said to have been no significance in the use of these soft feathers, but at one time it unquestionably had a meaning. In the ceremony of the Medicine Lodge today these eagle-feathers are constantly used.

Eagles' tail-feathers were prized for making war-bonnets—either a chaplet of feathers, standing upright about the head, or with two long tails, ornamented with feathers, standing at right angles to the rawhide support, hanging down the man's back, and so long that they trailed the ground as he walked. These feathers were set in a strip of stiff parfleche, and tied so that they stood erect. In modern times these eagle-feathers often bore tips of tiny red feathers or of dyed horse-hair attached to the ends of the eagle-feathers with plaster of Paris (burned gypsum).

Long, long ago, we are told, the Cheyennes manufactured for themselves what might be called beads, but perhaps were small charms made of some vitrified substance—perhaps of pulverized glass—after the white people were met. Such beads are said to have been made within two or three generations. Many of them were fashioned in the shape of a lizard; that is, a four-legged object with a long tail and a small head. The ceremony connected with making such objects was secret, and he who wished to possess one was obliged to go to some person who himself had been taught the ceremony, and to ask that person to teach him how to make one. A payment was made for the service. The two went away together to conduct the ceremony in private. It is believed that in old times, long before the whites came, these beads were made



Beaded shirt, Cheyenne, c. 1860



Beaded elk-tooth dress, Cheyenne, c. 1890



She Who Bathes Her Knees; painting by George Catlin. (See page 7 for a portrait of her husband, High Backed Wolf.)

from the quartz sand found on ant-hills, and that this was melted in an earthen pot. The secret of making them now seems to be lost.

In later times they melted the glass, with which to make the beads, in the ladles used in melting lead for

their bullets. These ornaments or charms were made in various shapes, often in the form of a lizard, as said, or flat on one side and round on the other. Sometimes they had a perforation through which a string might be passed; at other times merely a constriction be-

tween two ends about which a string was tied. The mold was made of clay.

The first European beads possessed by the Cheyennes were white, coarse, and imperfect in finish, but were highly valued. Few of these are now in existence.

Besides the armlets of brass and copper wire, necklaces of elk-teeth, deer-teeth, and fish vertebrae, were worn in old times. The earliest known bracelets are said to have been from lengths of hoop-iron wound about the wrist or arm and kept brightened by rubbing on a stone or with a file. As soon as beads came to be easily obtained, necklaces of fish vertebrae passed out of use. Few are now to be seen.

The old-time people wore rings in their noses. An old woman, now, or very recently, alive in the Cheyenne camp, can remember three old men who wore such nose ornaments. They took the shells of mussels and carved them into different shapes, and tying the shell to a deerskin string, passed the string through a hole in the septum of the nose. After the fashion of wearing shells passed out, they wore rings of metal in the nose, and after the nose ornament ceased to be fashionable, the practice arose of wearing earrings. These, up to the present time, were inserted in half a dozen holes cut in the cartilage of the ear, near its margin, but a long time ago—seventy-five or a hundred years—a long hole was cut in the cartilage near the margin, reaching from the top to the lobe; the hole was distended by a stick passed through it, until it healed, and then the margin of the ear was wrapped with beads strung on sinew. Adair and J. Long saw this fashion among other Indians in the eighteenth century. Big Woman told me that she remembered that, as a little girl, playing with her grandmother, she could put three of her fingers through each of the holes pierced in her grandmother's ears. This fashion must have disappeared about the middle of the last century. Big Woman's grandmother and her aunts were the last ones whom she remembers to have practiced it.

HAIR

In the early days—say before the nineteenth century—the men wore no scalp-lock, but often wore the hair behind stuck together with pine gum in several or a dozen little strings, hanging down the back, and this continued down to and beyond 1850. In those days the Cheyennes were noted for their very long

hair, and the old books speak of this. As a rule, today, these people have long, but not unusually long hair; yet occasionally an old Indian is seen whose hair, if free, would drag on the ground. Red Eagle, who lived on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation, wore his side-braids doubled up twice, yet they reached below his waist; while when he was sitting, a foot or more of his scalp-lock rested on the ground.

It is said that three or four generations ago the women used to braid the hair somewhat as they do now, and to wear as ornaments little fringed rolls of deerskin tied to the outside of the braids, close to the head. On the outer side of the deerskin rolls some women always tied sprigs of sage. Following this came a fashion in which the women doubled the braids up two or three times, and tied these bundles and the deerskin rolls behind the head.

Then came another method, which was practiced in 1830 or thereabouts and was remembered by women whom I knew well. This custom was to wear the hair, not hanging down as at present, but each braid was doubled up several times at the side in a little pack and fastened above and behind the ear, close to the head. Each bundle of hair was wrapped about with a little beaded or quill-ornamented rectangular piece of deerskin, so that on each side of the back of the head these bunches of hair stood up "like two little stub-horns." After the hair had been fixed in this way, the smooth hair on top of the head—not on the bunches—was painted with a red streak, from before backward, for every coup that the woman's husband had counted.

It is interesting to note that Carver² tells that the women that lived to the west of the Mississippi, namely, the Nadowessie and the Assinipoiles, divided the hair in the middle of the head, and formed it into two rolls, one against each ear. Carver says, to be sure, that these two rolls stood at the front of each ear, and this may be a modification before or after the Cheyenne fashion, which old women who were living in recent years remember to have seen practiced by their grandmothers.

In those old times the Cheyenne men dressed their hair very differently from the modern fashion. They say that in times very far back—long before the memory of the oldest person—they cut off much of the hair of the head. Some wore a narrow roach, and

² Carver's *Travels* (London, 1778), p. 230.

some a wide one, while others had a circular crown-piece, on which the hair was long, the rest of the hair being pulled out, so that the head was elsewhere naked. This has been told by the very oldest people, and through them comes down to the present time. It was a fashion of long ago. In later times the men commonly cut off all the hair except a little on the top of the head. This way of wearing the hair is of course comparable with certain familiar fashions of modern times, when the Pawnees, Osages, Kaws, and others, wore such roaches.

The figure of a man of the Nadowessie in Carver³ shows him apparently without hair over most of his head, but with a crown-tuft of longer hair, in which feathers are tied.

Among Indians, as among white people, the fashions changed. After the practice of wearing the roach, or a tuft of hair, became obsolete, they used to cut the hair square across the forehead, and stiffen it with clay, so that it stood straight up; then, stringing little shells on deerskin strings, they tied them to the hair on the front of the head, so that two of these strings of shells hung down on the right side of the face. The men braided the back hair somewhat as they do now. The cutting of the hair across the forehead and stiffening it with clay is said to have been an old method of hairdressing practiced by the Crees.

By a later fashion the hair was cut off on one side only and left on the other; thus there was only one braid, and one ear was covered by the hair and the other exposed. The covered ear was usually not ornamented, but in the exposed ear often many holes were bored, each of which held an ornament. This practice may have been continued to some extent up to modern times, for the right ear of my friend, White Elk, had been many times pierced, while in the left ear there was only a single hole.

A long time ago they used combs made of the rough skin of the end of a buffalo-tongue, scorched, so as to harden it. They still to some extent make and use combs or hair-brushes from the tail of the porcupine. The fresh skin is stretched over a stick, sewed tight, and dried, and the quills trimmed off evenly. The long seam where it is sewed together is often beaded or ornamented with quills.

INDUSTRIES AND UTENSILS

THE industries of the Cheyennes were few and simple. Their clothing was made of the skins of wild animals, dressed soft, sewed with sinew, often highly ornamented with the quills of the porcupine, and trimmed with fur or feathers, or with the hair of enemies. Their dwellings, in historic times, were also made of the skins of large animals and were warm, comfortable, light, and easily transported. Their cutting tools, and also their hammers, were usually of stone, while other implements were fashioned of wood, bone, or horn. Some of their knives were of bone. Their dishes were of wood, horn, or clay; and their pots for cooking, of fired clay, were strong and durable. In old times the paunch or hide of the buffalo often served as a kettle for boiling or stewing. Cups and buckets were made from the lining of the buffalo's paunch, stiffened above by a circular wooden ring sewed to the membrane with sinew, the holes being plugged with tallow.

Among the Indians there was practical community in the matter of food. A man who was hungry need never suffer. If he entered the lodge of some neighbor or acquaintance—unless it was a time of actual starvation—food was at once set before him. In the same way, as happens often among groups of simple civilized men, there was community of labor in some matters and a general spirit of helpfulness, which made easy for members of the tribe certain tasks which, without the aid of friends and neighbors, could not readily have been accomplished. Examples of this were seen in the way in which women of the camp often came together for the purpose of helping one another to make new lodges; and among men in the organized fashion in which certain hunting operations were performed. This spirit of kindness to one's neighbor, and this willingness to be of assistance to one another, were characteristic of all Indians, who, within the tribe, were a friendly, good-natured people. Although they had not formed habits of continued labor, they were always willing to take hold to help, even though this willingness did not result in any very long-continued effort.

With the coming of the white man, metal took the place of stone among the Cheyennes. After a time they ceased to make pottery; their ancient dishes were discarded for those of civilization, and the bowl made from the shell of the turtle, or from a knot knocked

³ Carver, *Travels*, pl. 3, p. 230.

from a box-elder or other tree, began to take on a sacred character and came to be used only for the mixing of medicine by a doctor, or for the special dish from which he ate or drank. Until very recently, among the older Cheyennes, there were still some who would not eat or drink from the metal dishes made by white men.

As brass kettles and tin cups took the place of earthenware pots and the cups made of buffalo paunch, so the gun and its powder and ball in time supplanted the bow and its arrow; and at last the soft, warm, and comfortable skin clothing gave place to the cast-off uniforms of United States soldiers. But this relation is of an earlier day, when the bow was the usual weapon used in hunting and in war, though even then its stone or bone point had passed out of use, and the sheet-iron arrowpoint, filed to a sharp edge and then whetted on a smooth river pebble, gave to this weapon a range and a penetration which it could not have had in the olden time.

In the life of the Cheyenne camp, woman was an equal partner with man, and the division of duties which existed between the sexes appeared in their industries. The men usually made men's utensils and weapons, and many of the ceremonial implements, while the women provided the articles used in the household, as well as the dwelling, the family clothing, and the cooking utensils.

The Cheyennes knew nothing of the art of weaving, though certain simple attempts in this direction were seen, as in the snowshoes, made by crossing strands of rawhide over a hoop, or the similarly interlaced rawhide used in the wheel with which they played a favorite game. They braided or twisted ropes of sinew for use in softening the hides which they dressed; these were either plaited in four strands or were tightly twisted in two. They made ropes of the hair of the buffalo's head, twisting long strands on a hook, afterward twisting them tightly together.

POTTERY

Although the Cheyennes were without cooking baskets such as more westerly tribes used for boiling food, they cooked—in early and even in later times—in essentially the same way. Their kettle was the hide or the paunch of an animal, which either lined a hole in the ground or was suspended bag-like from sticks set in the ground. Into this tight vessel holding water, red-hot stones were put, until the water boiled.

At some time, and in some fashion, they learned to make a serviceable pottery, which began to pass out of use only about 1850, when trade with the whites brought them metal vessels. Much earlier than this they had stone receptacles, similar to those told of by the Blackfeet. These were durable and useful, but were hard to make, and owing to their weight exceedingly difficult to transport.

As the earthenware vessels passed out of use so long ago, we can know little about them and the method of their manufacture, except by the stories told us by the few old people still, or recently, alive, who preserved clear recollections of the ancient art of pot-making. One of the last of these ancient Cheyenne pots was buried about 1896 with the old woman who owned it. The accounts given here come from old women, who received them from their mothers and grandmothers; but it would probably be difficult now to find among either section of the Cheyennes more than two or three old women who know how to make the old-time pottery. The accounts here given are precisely as they were repeated to me, and from them a reasonably clear idea may be had of the ancient industry.

Broken Jawed Woman—daughter of High Backed Wolf (died 1833), painted by Catlin—said to me: "In the days when we lived on the Missouri River, our dishes were made of wood, stone, and earthenware. We used a sort of clay, which was moistened and shaped, to make dishes. Pots were made for cooking, and we boiled meat in them. The small flat dishes were used to eat from, and the deeper ones to cook in.

"My mother used to tell me of the time when we made earthen pots. They used a kind of stone, pounding it all up fine, and after mixing this with clay they wet the mixture with water. Taking a lump of the mixture they shaped it with their hands, first making a depression in it, and with a fine smooth stick they patted out the inside of this depression until it was large enough; then with the stick they patted it all over the outside surface, and smoothed it. They fixed pieces on the upper part of the clay for handles, to lift the pot with, and after the vessel was dry they greased it all over, inside and out, with tallow. A place was smoothed off on the ground, and on this they put the pot, and covered it over with bark, gathered from dried trees, which was then set on fire. This bark made a strong heat. They let the pots burn, until they were red-hot, and then took the fire away from them, and left the pots there to cool slowly. Then they took

them out, all smooth, hard, and nice. Sometimes they burned only one pot at a time, sometimes two or three, and sometimes a great many.”

Some of the earthenware pots used by the Cheyennes were shaped like this:



Many were in use as recently as the time of the Horse Creek treaty [1851].

Little Woman gave the following account of the way in which pots were made in primitive times, received from her mother, whose age in the year 1902 was said to be one hundred and twelve years. She was certainly very old.

“When they wished to make pots (*ksó é’?*) or dishes of earthenware, a smooth round hole was dug in the ground, and was lined with a thick layer of wet clay. The clay was put on so thick that it would hold water. After this was done, the hair having been removed from the hide from a buffalo-bull’s head, where the skin is thickest, the hide was cut in small pieces, put in the hole, and the hole was then filled with water. In a large fire built near at hand, they now heated stones as hot as they could get them, and with wooden tongs took the red-hot stones, one by one, and put them in the hole with the water and the hide. As the stones became cool, they took them out and put in other hot ones. Soon the water was boiling, and they kept it boiling constantly. As the scum rose to the top, it was skimmed off and put in a dish. After the hide had been boiled to rags, and all the glue got from it, they took clay—of different colors—and mixed the clay with the gluey water and the scum which had been skimmed off. This was the material for their pots.

“Some pots were made of clay of only one color, and some of clays of different colors, so that some dishes were white, some red, some blue, and others of several colors, depending on the clay that had been used. The glue with which the clay was mixed made it stiff and tough. Some people shaped their pots with the hands, smoothing them with the moistened palm, while others used a flattened stick for this purpose. When the pots were properly shaped, they were put out to dry, the glue keeping them from cracking. While they were drying, a hole was dug in the side of a hill,

making a kind of oven, which was filled with wood and fired. After the wood had burned to coals, these and the ashes were raked out, and the dishes were put in and left there, the hole being tightly closed with a large stone, so that all the heat was kept in.¹

“For the bails on the kettles, a strip of green rawhide was put across the top, running from one side of the mouth to the other close to the top, and knotted there. This green hide was covered everywhere with a thick coating of clay, which kept it from cooking. Some pots, moreover, were strengthened with a strip of green hide running around the mouth, and thickly covered with clay.”

Various shapes of pots and dishes are shown by the following figures, drawn by the Indian woman:



Another ancient woman said: “The old women used to take clay and wet it; it would then stick to their hands, and they kneaded it as bread is kneaded. Having mixed a little sand with the clay, they shaped the pots, using chiefly their hands and water, but also using a flattened stick in shaping and working the clay. While these pots were wet they were very fragile, and had to be handled carefully. They were put in the sun to dry, and after they had dried, were greased all over, inside and out. A deep hole was dug in the ground, and a fire built in it, so as to heat it thoroughly. Then the pots were put in the hole, and a fire made over them—a very hot one—so that the pots became red-hot. The purpose of greasing the pots was to make them fire properly; if they were not greased, they would not fire at all. The pots were not ornamented.”

¹ In such a case it would seem that the vessels were not actually fired, but were merely kiln-dried, the glue holding them together. That no great heat could have been applied is shown by the way in which the bails were put on.

From all this it would seem that some of the pottery—that mixed with glue—was merely kiln-dried, but the pots for cooking were fired, as Broken Jawed Woman says. Mixed with the clay was a tempering of sand, and great heat would be required to cause this material to burn very hard. Bear Black says the pots were quite durable, and did not break easily.

HORSE EQUIPMENT

The Cheyennes were excellent horsemen, spending much of the time in the saddle, and during the last years of their wars making their excursions against their enemies chiefly on horseback; consequently the saddle was an important part of each man's equipment.

The saddles of old times were high-peaked as to both pommel and cantle, which consisted of the two prongs of a forked stick, before and behind, which rested on the two flat side-pieces supported by the horse's back, to which side-pieces they were bound with strings of rawhide. Over this frame, wet rawhide was tightly stretched and sewed, making the saddle very firm. The stirrups were short, and the rider, who was obliged to lift his leg high to clear the tall cantle, mounted with some effort. In war or in the buffalo chase the man commonly rode without a saddle, or rode on pads.

Saddles of more modern time were made of two flat side-pieces of wood, lashed to a low-arched pommel and cantle, both formed from the antler of a deer, the natural bend being used. Sometimes a prong was left on the antler forming the pommel, about which

the turn of a rope might be taken to render easier the leading of a horse. The whole was covered with wet buffalo rawhide, sewed with sinew. Such low saddles are comparatively modern inventions. The Cheyennes learned to make them from the Kiowas, and also from the Crows; for both these tribes used them.

For the making of saddles the horns of deer in the velvet were especially desirable. Such horns were easily bent and shaped, and easily cut; yet they dried out hard and, having been wrapped with strands of wet rawhide, were very strong.

Men who had gone on the warpath on foot to take horses often made riding pads which sometimes they carried with them from the camp. These were commonly formed of a long strip of dressed buffalo-hide—a piece of a robe—or even of a strip of blanket. The hide was folded over so as to make a double strip about a foot wide and four or five feet long. The long fold and one end were sewed up with sinew, and in the other end dried grass was stuffed evenly throughout and then also sewed up. Such a pad was girthed about the horse's chest; it was long enough to come down



Saddle and saddle blanket, Cheyenne, c. 1880



Beaded saddle blanket, Cheyenne, c. 1840

to the rider's knee on either side, and wide enough to give him room to sit comfortably.

After the pad had been in use for a time, the stuffing became packed hard. A slit, large enough to introduce the hand, was then cut lengthwise in the top of the pad, and the stuffing was taken out and replaced with fresh grass or with buffalo-hair. Little strings, fastened to the edges of this hole, were tied together to keep the stuffing from working out. When not in use the stuffing was removed, when the pads were light and took up little room.

Women's saddles up to modern times were of Arab type—very high before and behind, and with pommel curved forward and cantle curved back. Both were usually flattened so as to be from four to six inches wide. Women's saddles were often highly ornamented with brass tacks, leather fringes, and bead- or quillwork, and often had on the front of the pommel an upright projection on which a baby-board might be hung. Highly ornamented, fringed, quilled, and beaded saddle-cloths of tanned hide were used by well-to-do young women.

The old-time stirrups were made by women. They were of a single piece of green wood, about two inches wide, shaved down flat and thin. On either side of the place where the foot was to rest, the wood—a willow which they call big willow—was cut almost through at right angles to the length of the stick; the green wood was then bent up at right angles, and the ends brought together to form the sides and top of the stirrup. The two long ends, which ran up from either side, were made narrow by cutting them away at the sides, and were bent toward and across each other, and on down over the opposite side of the stirrup, almost or quite to the level of the foot-rest. At different points above and on the sides, they were lashed in place with wet sinew. Over this wooden frame, green buffalo-hide was stretched and sewed together round the semi-circle above the foot and in the middle beneath the foot-rest. This, when dried, made a firm, strong stirrup.

FIRE-STICKS

In the days before they had flint-and-steel, fire was often made, as among many people, with fire-sticks. The revolving stick was of some hard wood, and the piece, or hearth, which received its point, was of softer wood. Some men made a specialty of manufacturing fire-sticks, while others could not make them at all.

After a set of sticks had been made, the maker held them up to the sun and prayed over them, asking that they might be blessed and might prove useful. Gentle Horse (born 1800) stated that the lower of the two fire-sticks (the hearth) was commonly cottonwood, while the upright or twirling stick was a straight shoot of greasewood.

A little white quartz sand was often put in the hole in the hearth, and powdered dry buffalo-chip, or dry white sage leaves, about the edges of the hole, to serve as tinder, and this readily caught fire. Sometimes in kindling a fire they rested the lower stick on a buffalo-chip, and the hot spark dropping from this stick ignited the dry chip, which would smolder for a long time. In modern times, fire-sticks were sometimes made from the central flower-bearing stalk of the soapweed (yucca). Both the twirling stick and the base stick were of this wood. In their war journeys not very long ago, probably between 1860 and 1870, the Southern Cheyennes used such fire-sticks if their matches became exhausted. The earlier sticks were as described by Gentle Horse. In using the soapweed sticks, the twirling stick was pointed, and a little hole made in the base stick to receive that point. With these it did not take very long to make a fire. The sticks were revolved between the open hands.

Elk River stated that in ancient times fire was often made by splitting a flint stone, and then placing the dry rotten root of soapweed on one surface of the flint rock and rubbing it briskly with the other. Sparks were obtained also by knocking together two hard stones.

As fire was difficult to produce, it was transported from place to place. Sometimes a dry buffalo-chip was ignited, and this burned slowly and lasted a long time, perhaps during the whole march to the next camp. Often fire was carried with them by means of a burning stick. When the leaders of a traveling village reached the place chosen for the camp, the young men at once collected piles of wood; and as soon as anyone came in who carried fire, these piles were kindled and from them the different women procured coals for starting their individual fires.

In later times, however, they carried the living fire, smoldering, and often renewed, in a fire horn. I have explained² how the Blackfoot Indians did this; and the Cheyenne method was much the same, except their

² *Blackfoot Lodge Tales*, p. 200.

horns were smaller. In later times, after they obtained flint-and-steel, the fire horn was used for carrying the unlighted punk, to protect it from wet and wear. This punk was usually dry, rotten cottonwood, or box-elder wood, or the dry, rotted root of the soapweed. They cut off the end of the sheath of the horn, making a hole large enough to receive the stick of punk. The larger open end of the horn was plugged with a stopper of wood, and the stick of punk was of such length that, when put in the horn, the end for lighting met the wooden plug, and the fire was extinguished. Horns for carrying punk were in use up to about 1870. They were usually carried in a deerskin sack, sometimes in the ball pouch, or sometimes merely tied to the shoulder belt. The stopper in the small opening of the horn was not always tight, and sometimes leaked a little, so that in a storm, dampness or water might get into it, and the end of the punk get wet. When this took place, the end which became wet was the holding end, not the fire end.

The first flint-and-steel is said to have been obtained from Mexicans.

ROOT-DIGGER

At certain seasons of the year the Cheyenne woman spent much time unearthing from the prairie the wild

roots which form a part of the people's food. This work was done with a root-digger (*bis'so*), a slender, sharp-pointed implement to be thrust into the ground to pry out the roots. In modern times the root-digger has been of iron—any sort of an iron bar. In earlier days, however, these implements were of wood, usually of ash, the point sharpened and hardened in the fire. One kind of root-digger was two-and-one-half to three feet long, and had a knob at one end to protect the hand. The point was thrust into the ground, near the root, and as the soil was often hard, considerable force was needed to force the point in. The woman commonly folded her robe, or blanket, and putting it between her body and the blunt end of the root-digger, as she knelt or squatted on the ground, pushed the tool into the soil. A shorter form of root-digger was pressed into the ground by pushing the knee against it. A third form was a long stick, as tall as a man and forked at the upper end, which the woman used somewhat like a crowbar, as she stood erect. These long root-diggers were sometimes painted red over the lower half and black at the handhold. When the points of root-diggers became blunt, they were sharpened with a knife, and rehardened in the fire. Long ago they used prongs of elk-antler as short root-diggers—those pressed against the knee—and sometimes they used tent-pins. It is said also that



Digging for *pommes blanches*, unknown Cheyennes

still farther back the longer root-diggers were pointed with the tips of elk-antlers, lashed to sticks with wet rawhide.

The root-digger was given to them by the Creator, for their support, and it possessed something of a sacred character. The short root-digger was used in the Medicine Lodge for ceremonially digging the holes which were to receive the center pole, and other holes in which were to stand certain branches used in building the altar, and at this ceremony it was put in the Thunder's nest and sacrificed along with an arrow. The two were offered, as I conceive, as a part of the general petition that food—both the flesh of animals and the fruits of the earth—might be abundant. Besides this, the root-digger was used in connection with certain forms of sweat-house, to make, ceremonially,



White Buffalo Woman

the holes in which the willow branches forming the frame of the sweat-house were set in the ground.

MAULS

Stone hammers were an important part of the women's domestic equipment and varied in size according to their uses. Large stone mauls were employed as axes to break up tree trunks into pieces small enough to be carried on the back for fuel, to drive tent-pins, and to break the large bones of animals. Smaller hammers were employed to break bones into small fragments before they were boiled for the grease, and hammers still smaller were used in pounding choke-cherries for cooking or to be dried for winter use, as well as for pulverizing dried roots and dried meat. These smaller hammers were used on flat, circular stones—anvils—one surface of which was often worn quite flat, or even hollowed out, by continued use. When in use, these stone anvils, which usually show that they have been taken from river beds, but which may be found on the prairie as part of the glacial drift, were often placed on a circular or an oval piece of rawhide in order that fragments of bones, choke-cherries, or dried meat, while being pounded, might not fall on the ground, but might be picked up, and if necessary pounded still further. This hammer and anvil arrangement represents, of course, the mortar and pestle so constantly used for pulverizing food by different tribes the continent over.

The mauls or hammers were formed in the usual way, by pecking out about the short diameter of an oval stone a groove in which, when deep enough, a wythe was laid, running around the stone and then off at right angles to the stone's axis, to form a handle. The wythe was held in place and protected by a covering of buffalo-hide put on wet and sewed with sinew, and this rawhide covered also the long handle. Sometimes berries were pounded with a small hammer-head which had no handle, or, where no particular force was needed, any oval stone not much larger than an egg might be held in the hand to pound berries.

Such small hammers were used for breaking up the flints for making arrowpoints.

Similar hammers, with longer handles and with longer, larger, and sometimes ornamented heads, were carried by men in war, and formed the weapon commonly called "skull-cracker," or "war-club," sometimes used in battle to strike the enemy.

RECEPTACLES

Spoons and ladles used in cooking, filling water vessels, and in skimming off the grease from boiling bones, were made chiefly of horn of the buffalo or the mountain sheep, but sometimes of wood or of the carapace of a tortoise. What may have been used before the Cheyennes reached the plains, we do not know, but very likely birch-bark. The horn spoon was made by boiling or steaming the horn, and as it became soft, by bending it into the required shape and letting it dry. These objects were made by the women, who took great care to see that they dried slowly and did not lose their shape. Some of the sheep-horn ladles were very large, with long handles. Such spoons and ladles were practically indestructible, and were handed down in families for a long time. I have never seen spoons made from antlers.

Bowls used to hold food or for drinking, or as vessels in which to mix medicine, were made of wood or of the carapace of the turtle. The wooden bowls were carved out indifferently by men or women. Sometimes the large knots on trees were hollowed out by fire and the knife. In Oklahoma flat bowls or dishes were commonly made from the wood of the pecan or the poplar, while deeper similar bowls were carved from oak. Some bowls were flat and others quite deep. They varied much in size, and usually were not ornamented.

Vessels for carrying water were most often made from the paunch of the buffalo. The lining was stripped off smooth, and a little hoop made from a slender stick was tied about the opening of the paunch. A stick was then fastened across the hoop and to this stick a string was tied to carry the vessel. They filled this receptacle with a horn ladle, and sometimes, when it was nearly full, tied a string around it just below the hoop, to keep the water from spilling. Temporary drinking-cups, shaped somewhat like a cup or tumbler, were made from buffalo-paunch lining, with a hoop above and at the bottom, sewed to the membrane. The awl holes were stopped with tallow.

Paunch water receptacles were used as recently as 1860-1870, but without the hoop and stick. They were merely tied about the neck with a string.

Other old-time water-skins were made of buffalo bladder or of buffalo pericardium, whence the general name for the vessel—*hístāi' wittsts*—literally, "heart covering," i.e., the pericardium. This suggests that the original water-skin was made from the pericardium,

and that the other parts of animal used were later adaptations. These membranes, when freshly taken, were blown full of air and allowed to dry. Before they became too dry they were taken down and rubbed between the hands to soften them, and this seemed also to make them thicker. Water-skins for the special use of babies or small children were usually made from the pericardium of the buffalo.

The durability of such skins in summer depended on the care taken of them. In hot weather, if they were not kept filled, they emitted a disagreeable odor after three or four days, and had to be thrown away; but if kept filled, or, when empty, exposed to the sun and dried, they lasted a long time. In the lodge they were tied to the lodge-poles at one side of the door, or they were hung outdoors on a tripod in the shade. On the march they were suspended from the platform of the travois, or, if to be used during the march, from the arched, covered roof of the travois platform.

THE PIPE

The early pipes of the Cheyennes were straight (cigar-shaped), somewhat like the modern automobile pipe. Until quite recently—within my knowledge of the tribe—many men still smoked these straight pipes, made of the shank-bone of a deer or an antelope, cut off at either end, the marrow punched out, and the mouth-end pared down and made smooth. Before being much used, such a pipe was commonly wrapped with the ligament from the back of a buffalo-bull's neck, and this, when dried, made so complete a reinforcement of the bone that the pipe might last a very long time. Pipes of similar form were made of stone, but were not common, and as they grew rarer came to have a sacred character, and were smoked only at particular times. The pipe used at the Medicine Lodge is straight and of stone. The straight bone pipes were easier to carry than the more bulky and elaborate stemmed pipes, and were therefore often taken on war expeditions by preference for ordinary smoking.

The usual modern pipes were fashioned much like those of the Sioux and other prairie tribes, and while often of red catlinite, were sometimes of a soft black slate, which was easily carved. Frequently they were somewhat elaborate in the carving, and some of them were inlaid with lead. Such pipes were whittled with a knife, and there was a great difference in the work performed by different men. Of late years redstone pipes of this character have been turned out in quan-

tities from white men's factories, for the soft catlinite is easily worked on a lathe.

Formerly there were war medicine (sacred) pipes. Their use is described elsewhere.³



Smoking utensils, Cheyenne, collected by George Bird Grinnell

TANNING

As the skin clothing they wore and the skin lodges they lived in were made by the women, the implements with which she tanned her skins were very important to the Cheyenne woman. These were four in number: (1) The scraper, by which the blood, fat, and flesh were removed from the inner surface of the green hide; (2) the flesher, commonly a piece of elk-horn, bent at a right angle, and armed anciently with a cutting edge of flint and in modern times with a more or less keen steel blade, so that the whole implement formed a little adze for thinning the hide; (3) the proximal end of the humerus of the buffalo, cut off just below the articulation, the rough surface of which rubbed over the smoothed flesh surface of the hide served to abrade it, so that it might readily ab-

sorb the tanning mixture; (4) the softening rope, or the shoulder blade of the buffalo, to be described later, either of which was used to break up the fiber of the hide, and to make it soft and pliable after the tanning was completed.

The scraper, in old times, was an oval, flat stone, often a slate or quartzite pebble chipped down so as to have a rather sharp and even edge all around. Sometimes it was large enough to be used in both hands. In modern times crescentic metal scrapers, shaped like an ordinary chopping knife and set in a handhold of wood, were sometimes used.

Another form of scraper was the cannon-bone of a buffalo, cut off diagonally from above downward toward the distal end, and with the sharp edge notched. Through the proximal end of such a scraper a hole was usually drilled for a thong of tanned buffalo-hide, which formed a loop through which the hand was passed.

More recent scrapers were made from a section of the barrel of an old-fashioned, smoothbore gun. A piece of the barrel ten inches long was sawed off and at one side split for two or three inches from one end, the split cylinder opened, pounded out nearly flat, and then notched or toothed. The cylindrical part of the barrel above the opening, to be held in the hand, was usually wound spirally with a thong of tanned buffalo leather.

The obvious use of all these forms of scrapers was to go over the flesh side of a green hide stretched out and pinned down to the ground, or put in a frame, and to scrape from it all blood, fat, and particles of flesh that still clung to it. To get the best results in tanning, it was important that before it dried the hide should be freed from everything that might interfere with its drying evenly.

The adze-like flesher (2) was used to chip off thin flakes from the flesh side of the hide, so as to reduce it to the proper thickness for tanning, or to remove the hair from the other side. In ancient times the cutting edge of this implement was of flint, bound to the horn with strings of rawhide, or sometimes of sinew. These elk-horn fleshers did not wear out, and were handed down from mother to daughter or niece, perhaps for several generations. It was a matter of pride for a woman to possess a flesher made by her grandmother or her grandmother's mother. I have seen many that have been so long in use that deep, smooth cavities have been worn in the hard elk-horn, where the thumbs of successive generations of women have

³ See pp. 187-188.

held it while working. Women kept the metal blades of their fleshers sharp by whetting them, usually with a smooth quartzite pebble from the river gravel.

One of these fleshers was given me by the wife of White Bull, when she was sixty-five or seventy years of age. Its first known owner was Magpie Woman; when she grew old she gave it to her daughter, Sun Woman; when Sun Woman grew old she gave it to her daughter, Hole In The Nose, but Hole In The Nose fell sick and died, and Sun Woman kept it, and

when she died it came to Bull Wool Woman, the wife of Frog, who was a distant relation of Spotted Wolf. From her it passed to her daughter, White Bull's wife. Bull Wool Woman had been dead nearly fifty years when the implement came into my hands, when it was perhaps 140 to 150 years old. In old times they often made a flesher for a little girl, which at first she played with and later learned to use. The girl might keep count of her age on the flesher, scratching a line across it each year until she married. After this, she recorded the years of her children on it in the same way.

An implement for removing the hair from a hide was shaped somewhat like a carpenter's spoke-shave, and might be formed of a somewhat bent willow stick an inch in diameter. In the concave part of the bend a lengthwise groove was dug out, into which was set a sharpened scale of bone, six or eight inches long and one inch wide. One edge of this blade was fitted and glued into the groove. In practical use the other sharp edge was drawn down over a hide supported on an inclined pole, to take the hair from the skin. In later times this tool was made with a blade of metal. I am not wholly clear that this is a primitive implement, though I believe it to be so.

The operation of tanning skins was similar among various Indian tribes, yet not always the same. The essential operations were the preparation of the hide, the application of the tanning mixture, and the subsequent working of the skin.

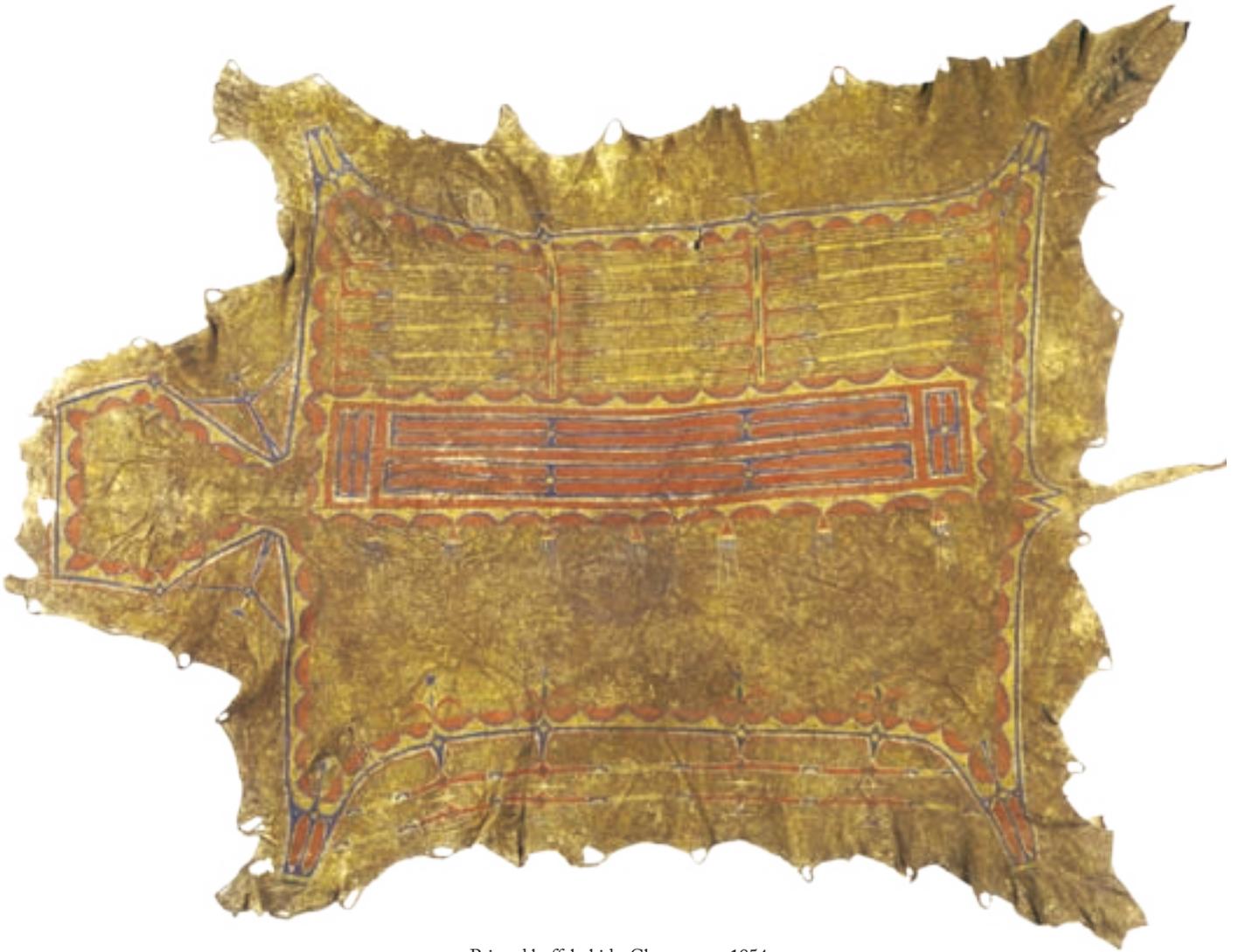
Brains, liver, soapweed, and grease were used for tanning. The root of the soapweed was gathered, peeled, and pounded up fine, and the pulverized brains, liver, and soaproot were thoroughly mixed together. Grease of any kind was then added to the compound, but when especially nice white tanning



Preparing a hide, unknown Cheyenne



Buffalo bone scraper



Painted buffalo hide, Cheyenne, c. 1854

was desired, bones were pounded up and boiled, and the grease or oil extracted from them was used. This tanning material was applied to both sides of the hide, and was thoroughly rubbed in. The hide was then folded up and put aside overnight, so that the mixture should soak all through the skin. The next day it was unfolded and laid out in the sun to dry. After it was dry, the tanned skin was softened as a robe is softened, by pulling to and fro through the hole in a shoulder blade, or against a rope of buffalo sinew. The rope was tied above to a tree or a post and ran diagonally down to a peg fastened in the ground. The rope was stretched tight. The woman knelt on the ground and pulled the hide back and forth, flesh side against the rope, until it was softened. Some women preferred to

use a buffalo shoulder blade in softening a robe. The inner part of the bone was cut away, leaving, however, a strong border. Then, by its joint, the shoulder blade was securely tied to a tree or to some immovable object, and the robe was passed through the hole in the bone and pulled backward and forward against the bone. Sometimes a stick, smoothed down on two sides to a blunt edge, was fastened to a tree above and to the ground below, and the robe was pulled backward and forward against the edge of the stick.

The work of softening a robe was long and laborious, but the women were industrious, and, moreover, time was not important to them. A woman worked until she was tired, and then put her task aside, to be resumed at her convenience.

TANNING THE WOLF SKIN

Of taboos for women some had to do with the dressing of hides. Women might not dress the hides of bear, beaver, wolf, or coyote; such hides were usually dressed by captive women of other tribes, or, in early days, sometimes by men. Women believed that if they should dress a bear-skin the soles of their feet would crack, and hair would grow over their faces. They also feared that they might become "nervous," like a bear. In several other Plains tribes the women fear to dress a bear's hide.

Since wolves were common and desirable as food, and since their hides were useful, it was worth while that these should be tanned. There was a woman's society whose members after certain ceremonies were freed from the taboo attaching to the skins of wolves and coyotes, and were at liberty to dress the hides. It was believed that any woman who should dress a wolf's hide without going through these ceremonies and so joining this society would become palsied. Many women underwent this ceremony, which was neither difficult nor costly.

The man who directed the ceremony by which women were freed from the operation of this taboo was a member of the young Wolf Medicine Society. On determining when the ceremony should be performed, he sent a crier through the camp, announcing that any woman who wished to join this society should come to his lodge, which for the purpose consisted of two large lodges set up together. Usually there were a number of candidates.

Before the ceremony began, a wolf-skin had been placed on a bed of white sage in the back of the lodge, behind the fire. The man sat on his bed, at the south side of the lodge—the left side of the entrance. When the women came in, they wore their ordinary clothing, save that their feet were bare. Each woman wore her knife, as usual, and each carried in her right hand a filled pipe, and in the left hand a gift. In recent times this gift was often calico, though it might be almost anything; but in old times parfleches were not uncommonly given. The women passed one by one before the master of ceremonies, and each offered to him the pipe which she carried. He smoked, thus agreeing to take charge of her initiation, and she placed the gift on the ground before him. After all had done this, they sat down and let their dresses fall to the waist. The master of ceremonies then proceeded to paint them, first the right foot from the ankle down; then

the right hand from the wrist down; then the left foot, and the left hand. Next a circle—the sun—was painted on the chest, a crescent moon over the right shoulder blade, and the face from halfway up the nose down to the throat. Only red paint was used.

Sometimes the wolf-skin which lay behind the fire was an old one; sometimes one from a recently killed wolf was used. On the feet and nose, the skin was painted with red paint, and a streak of red paint ran from the nose to the tail. On the right shoulder was painted a half-circled half-moon, and between shoulders a circle, a sun. The master of ceremonies took the knife belonging to the first woman, rubbed its sides and back with a bit of charcoal, and returned it to the woman, who cut a little hair, or a little skin and hair, from the right shoulder of the wolf-skin, held it toward the sky, and then dropped it on the ground behind the wolf's shoulder. Then she cut a piece from the right side of the rump, held it toward the sky, and put it on the ground behind the right hind leg. She did the same to the left hip and to the left shoulder. Finally she cut a piece from the wolf's withers, and held it up and placed it on the ground as before. Then she left the lodge and stood outside.

Each woman did the same thing, until all had left the lodge, when they formed in a line, standing abreast, and from within the lodge the master of ceremonies instructed them to go outside the camp, passing through the opening in the circle on the east side, then turning to the right to go south, then west, then north, and then east. This they did. When they reached the south side of the circle they faced south, held up their hands toward the south and howled like a wolf. Then going on, they stopped at the west side, held their hands toward the west and again howled, and at the north side and the east side they did the same. Then, having completed the passage about the outside of the camp, they returned through the opening in the circle to the lodge of the master of ceremonies, where he awaited them. As they passed through the center of the circle they stopped and again howled like a wolf. When they had entered his lodge, the master of ceremonies took a bundle of white sage and passed it over the parts where each woman was painted, thus ceremonially "wiping off" the paint. The women then left his lodge, went to the river, and washed off the paint. After this ceremony had been performed, these women might at any time stretch and dress wolf-hides.



1. BEAR, CHEYENNE, 24

AMERICAN PHOTO

✦ FOOD AND HUNTING ✦

FOOD SOURCES

IT is commonly assumed that the Indian lived solely by hunting and fishing, and subsisted altogether on flesh, but this is not true. A considerable portion of his sustenance was derived from the soil. Like most tribes, the Cheyennes cultivated the ground, and raised corn, squashes, beans, and tobacco. At their proper season, wild fruits and roots were gathered, and these furnished an important part of their living.

EARLY DIET

We learn only by tradition about the subsistence of the Cheyennes before they reached the buffalo plains. They know nothing about when or where they first obtained the corn, but their old stories point to a long residence in a country where the sugar-maple grows, and they say that sugar formed a part of their food. They had always been hunters, and their code permitted them to eat all flesh—most birds and mammals, as well as fish and some reptiles, creatures which are an abomination to certain Plains tribes.

In that early period of their wanderings spoken of by the Cheyennes as “long, long ago, when they were in the North,” they say that they had little knowledge of large food animals. There was a time when they subsisted almost wholly on small animals with long ears—rabbits—and at another period they lived chiefly on fish. At a later day, they visited in summer lakes and streams, and gathered the eggs of wild fowl and killed the young, not yet able to fly, as well as the adults when they were molting and had lost their flight feathers. In autumn, when the skunks were fat, it was their custom to move to certain hills where these animals abounded, and they secured great numbers of them. Such places were visited time after time, and much food secured. These hunts were systematized and well managed. All those in the camp were expected to take part in them and to act under the orders of designated leaders. The food secured was common property, and its legitimate share was assigned to each family.

After the Cheyennes reached the region of the Great Lakes and the country where the wild rice grows, they no doubt harvested this crop, which furnished them a winter food, as at the present day it gives partial subsistence to their relatives, the Ojibwas and the Menomini.

DIET ON THE PLAINS

After they had left the Missouri River and come out on the plains, their food was essentially that of the other Plains Indians of that region, and since they ranged north and south for a great distance along the eastern flanks of the Rocky Mountains, they had a considerable variety in wild food plants, birds, and mammals.

A tea was made from the leaves of the “red leaf wood.” This is a small shaggy bush, with very hard wood, very narrow leaves, and a yellow flower, growing not more than three or four feet high. The tea made from these leaves, or from the root, is red, like sassafras tea, and tastes somewhat like green tea. It does not grow in the North, but is found in South Dakota and Oklahoma. It is called “red medicine” and is used in doctoring. A tea was made also from the leaves of a certain mint.

Up to the middle of the last century the Cheyennes pounded up and boiled as a mush, with a little buffalo fat, the large acorns of one of the southern oaks. These were best prepared by roasting or parching the acorns in the shell; then, after removing the shells, the kernels were pounded fine and the meal was spread in the sun to dry. This meal furnished a fairly palatable food.

They had a sweetening after they came out on the buffalo plains, and before they received sugar from the whites. In early spring, as soon as the weather began to grow warm, they tapped the box-elder tree and used the boiled sap as sweetening. Often the sap was boiled in a kettle with the shavings from the inner side of the hides of animals, and this made a kind of sap candy, which was greatly relished. In modern days, when they had coffee, but no sugar with which to sweeten it, they sometimes used box-elder sap instead of water to boil their coffee.

They now call sugar sweet water—*vīk' a mā' pi*, sometimes pronounced *ve' a mā' pi*. They used to call it *mīsh kē mai'māpi*, box-elder water; from *mīsh kē māpi*, box-elder tree + *māpi*, water. They have the same name, *mīshkemaimapi*, for the sap of the maple. The sap of the box-elder is very sweet, and a sugar may be made by boiling it, as is sometimes done today.¹

The cultivation and harvesting of vegetable foods were the work chiefly of the women; and at the proper season of the year—in spring for roots, and in late summer for berries—parties of women of all ages, with their children, set out to garner the natural crops.

Berries were dried for consumption in winter, when they were boiled, either alone or with meat. Fresh choke-cherries were pounded fine and mixed with pulverized buffalo meat and tallow to make pemmican. Fresh or dried, they used sarvisberries, plums, choke-cherries, sand-cherries, bull-berries, and currants. After these fruits had been pounded

fine so that seeds or pits had been thoroughly broken up, the moist mass was pressed into flat, thin, rectangular cakes, perhaps two-and-a-half inches by two inches, and laid out on a skin or a piece of cloth to dry in the sun. When thoroughly dried, the cakes were packed away in small rawhide sacks, which again were stored in the larger parfleches.

The *pomme blanche*² was gathered in June, for a little later the root becomes good for nothing, while the tops fall off in July. The roots vary in size from that of a pigeon's egg to a large root four inches long and from two to two-and-one-half inches in diameter. They were cooked fresh, or were dried for winter use. Sometimes they are eaten raw, but if too freely indulged in cause indigestion and discomfort. Raw, the taste of the roots somewhat suggests a chestnut. The larger roots were cut in pieces for drying, and Hinds³ relates how he saw the Crees cutting these roots into shreds for this purpose. The Cheyennes more commonly cut them into thin, lengthwise slices, which



Pounding cherries, unknown Cheyennes

¹ Gilmore, *Uses of Plants by the Indians of the Missouri River Region*, 33rd Report, Bureau of American Ethnology (Washington, 1919).

² *Tipsin* of Gilmore.

³ Hinds' *Canadian Red River Exploration*, vol. I (London, 1860), p. 319.

soon lose their moisture. The dried pieces are often pounded fine on the same stones used in pounding berries, and then are used as a thickening for soup.

The women speak of about thirty-five or forty plants which serve them as food, of which sixteen or more are fruits, and eight or ten roots. I do not think that the Cheyennes ever knew the camas, which does not grow on the plains. They do, however, eat the bulbs of several lily-like plants, such as the mariposa lily.⁴

When the first shoots of the so-called red cocklebur, or wild licorice (*mât kânt no wās*), appear in spring, these are watched, and when they have grown to the height of a foot, they are cut and eaten raw. They are sweet and tender. The tender stalks of a milkweed are used in the same way.

A root, somewhat like a potato, with a red skin, many tubers growing on the root tendrils of a single plant, grows on a climbing vine. The tuber is more than an inch and a half in diameter.

GROWING CORN AND THE CORN DANCE

According to statements made to me by old women and men who died between 1900 and 1915, and others living in 1918, the Cheyenne farmed regularly on Grand River, on the Little Missouri and the North Platte, and on the Laramie. Up to the year 1876 they kept up their Corn Dance, and retained the sacred ear of corn which is supposed to have been raised from the original seed brought out by one of the two similarly dressed young men who went into the spring and received the buffalo meat, corn, and other things, from the old woman within the hill.⁵ Watched, cared for, and revered, this ear would make the crops grow well. After corn-growing had been abandoned, as it was in war times, the ear was still kept as a sacred object.

They relate that the Corn Dance came down from the time when they first planted, and was practiced up to the date of the Mackenzie fight (1876), but that since they have had agencies, and lived with the white people, the dance has been given up. The Corn Dance was, they say, practiced by young girls and middle-aged women, who danced in a circle. Men sang for



Working the soil, unknown Hidatsa

the dance, and shook a gourd rattle, which they called and which represented a squash. The woman who led the dance carried the sacred ear of corn on a stick which was fitted into a hole in the butt of the ear. In later times the dance was occasionally held as a social performance—one of rejoicing—as, for example, on the return of a successful war-party, in which no one had been wounded.

The corn was planted in quincunxes, four grains at the corners of the square, and one in the middle; and the grains were put in the ground with the soft end up. In plantings which have taken place since 1850, old men and old women have been seen to carry water from the stream to water the hills of corn. It is said that some of the hoes which they used in cultivating their corn were made of stones—sometimes chipped to a proper flat shape; but sometimes, also, they found natural stones, which could be lashed to a stick and used for the purpose. Hoes were made also from the shoulder blade of buffalo or of elk, lashed to a handle. Indeed, they used for this purpose any bone that they could fashion to the required shape.

The growing of corn is always referred to as a common incident of old-time village life, and there is no doubt that it was usually grown. Knowing the conservatism of Indian women, we may feel certain that they would not easily have laid aside the agricultural practices that had come down to them through the generations, but that even after they had moved out onto the plains, wherever the situation was favorable, and there was a prospect that they would return during the summer, the old women planted their crops

⁴ Pierre Jean DeSmet, *Western Missions* (p. 81), says roots of water arrow (*Sagittaria rigida*) and of wild lily (*Convallaria corealis*) are prized by Indians.

⁵ Editor's Note: See chapter on "The Cultural Heroes."



Camp with meat hung to dry, unknown Cheyennes

and impressed on their daughters the duty of doing likewise. Many old Cheyenne women who were born in or near the Black Hills early in the last century, and who lived on the streams flowing out from them, have repeated to me time and again that they commonly planted corn patches, as their mothers before them had done, and had taught them to do.⁶

In a recent conversation with Hankering Wolf, who was a boy of thirteen at the time of the Fort Laramie Treaty (1851), he incidentally mentioned that the year before that council was to be held the

⁶ When the Cheyennes lived along the Missouri, and no doubt later, after they had moved to the Black Hills, they had at least two kinds of beans, of which one was wild and one cultivated. One of these varieties is described as shaped like a lima bean and was whitish in color; the other was spotted yellow and white, or purple and white. According to Short Woman, the mother of Elk River, one of these kinds of beans was commonly cultivated; the other kind, believed to be *Falcata comosa*, grew wild. This plant has small beans produced from the flowers, and bears also large beans at the ends of leafless, colorless branches prostrate on the ground in the dense shade of the upper branches.

Cheyennes put in their crops on a broad flat on the Platte River, just below the main canyon and above the first small canyon above Fort Laramie. It was from this point that they moved down to the treaty ground at Horse Creek.

FLESH FOOD

After the Cheyennes moved out to the great plains a marked change took place in their habits. Here they found buffalo in great numbers, yet more or less migratory with the seasons. The tribe, which hitherto had been chiefly sedentary, occupying permanent villages and tilling the soil, modified its ways of life when it met the new conditions. The necessity of following the buffalo from place to place led to the abandonment of permanent habitations, while the increased supply of flesh food rendered less imperative the cultivation of the soil, though it was still practiced until the active wars of 1868 to 1878 made agriculture no longer possible. In the North, cultivation of the ground began again after the surrender, and in varying degree has continued ever since.

In modern times the buffalo formed the chief sustenance of the people, and, as with most other prairie Indians, practically all parts of the animal were eaten. The tongue and nose were delicacies, while the liver sprinkled with gall was a favorite dish; the small intestine, filled with chopped meat, was roasted or boiled; the marrow-bones were split and the contents eaten, and, as will be seen farther on, almost the whole of the animal, except the bones and hoofs, was used for food in some form or other.

A favorite dish was the flesh of a yellow calf boiled with *pomme blanche* roots in a liquor made of water and the grease from the bones of fat cows. The lungs of the buffalo were cut open, dried, and roasted on the coals.

The Cheyennes cooked blood in the rennet of the buffalo. They built a good fire, and when it had burned down to coals, a bed of hot ashes was raked out in front of the fire; the rennet was filled with blood, and tied with sinew at the small end; it was placed on the hot ashes, and the woman who was cooking it tapped it constantly with a stick, and rolled it over and over in the ashes until the blood boiled and cooked. After it had been cooking some little time, she tested it every now and then, pulling it out of the ashes, and pricking it with a small and very sharp stick. If blood ran out of the puncture, the cooking was not complete, and

it was put back again. At length, when no blood followed the pricking, the rennet was pulled out, opened, and the cooked blood eaten. It was no longer fluid, but was hard, like jelly.

The hide of the buffalo-bull was eaten. One way of cooking it was in a saucer-shaped depression dug in the ground, and lined with grass or leaves, on which were spread out large pieces of the fresh hide. Over the hide were two or three layers of green leaves, and on the leaves were placed a number of ribs or other flat bones to hold the leaves down. A layer of about four inches of clay was spread over this and was pounded down solidly and smoothed off, and on this floor of clay was built a large fire of dry wood which was kept burning for three or four hours. Then the fire was swept aside, the clay, bones, and leaves were removed, and the hide taken out. The hair slipped off easily from the hide, which was quite tender and very good. Many women saved the scrapings from the hides which they tanned, and dried and put them in parfleches, against a time of scarcity. Then they were boiled and made a palatable food.

The flesh of the buffalo, including the back fat, was cut in thin slices and dried in the sun or on lines

stretched in the lodge. Pemmican was made by roasting dried meat, and pounding it fine with a stone maul on a hard, flat stone which rested on an oval, somewhat dish-shaped, parfleche. The operation was not unlike that of pounding cherries. The Cheyennes, however, made pemmican on a small scale—for present use only and not to store.

When young dogs were needed for a feast, they were strangled by the women of the family. Originally, it is said, the Cheyennes did not eat dogs, but were driven to it by hunger; or perhaps the custom was borrowed from some other tribe. They eat young wolves and coyotes, as they do young puppies, and also young wildcats and panthers, usually not by choice, but in case of need. Badgers and skunks are good to eat, but otters are not. They eat neither birds of prey nor crows, except under stress of hunger. The magpie they do not eat at all, because, they say, it won for them the race during the contest to see whether the buffalo should eat the people or the people should eat the buffalo. They are very fond of turtles.

Though the Cheyennes ate horseflesh, they preferred other meat. Deer, elk, wild sheep, and antelope, were all taken and the flesh used.



Buffalo stampede

HUNTING METHODS

THE hardships of the Indian warpath have often been spoken of, but little seems to have been written of the labor of his hunting. Most civilized writers seem to have assumed that hunting was all pleasure. This view is taken because to the white man hunting is a pastime, a recreation, and we assume that it is so to all people. To the Indian, hunting was work, and often work of the hardest kind.¹ This aspect of hunting has often been learned by the white man—as the market hunter—when necessity and not pleasure has been the motive for the pursuit. To the Plains Indian hunting was never a recreation, but was the chief labor by which he supported life.

Writers, quite ignorant of Indians, but who wish to give local color to fanciful descriptions of Indian hunting, sometimes describe the hunters as yelling in the excitement of the chase. It would be as fitting to write of a farmer as yelling in the excitement of plowing or of milking his cows.

Although making some provision against a time of scarcity, as did most tribes of the buffalo plains, the Cheyennes yet often faced want. Winter and summer the camp must be supplied with food, and no matter how tempestuous the weather or how bitter the cold, if food was lacking, men were obliged to hunt. Often, while out in winter after buffalo, they were chilled to the bone by the bitter winds and were caught in blinding prairie snowstorms and obliged to camp for days, perhaps, without fuel, often freezing hands and

¹ This is a point apparently little understood. One writer has mentioned it—but in quite another connection—while discussing the Indian's idea of the future life. "To us Europeans hunting is more or less an amusement, but to the Indian it is a toil, and frequently a most fatiguing mode of life. In many Indian dialects the words 'hunter' and 'hunting' are synonymous with 'work' and 'working.' A good hunter is a clever and industrious workman. As, then, the idea entertained by most nations of paradise is that it will be without toil or labor, it is to me more than doubtful whether they regard the chase as an element of their paradisiac existence. Among the Ojibbeways I never heard that they held such a view. I once asked a man of their tribe, who was describing paradise to me, and did not at all allude to hunting, 'And then you will go every day to hunt and kill a countless number of animals?' 'Oh no!' he replied dryly, 'there is no hunting or labor in paradise'" (Kohl, *Kitchigami* [London, 1860], p. 212).

feet. If the buffalo disappeared, the young men must make long journeys in search of them, and often their sufferings from fatigue, hunger, and cold were very great. At such times the women were safe at home in the camp, by the fire, having no labor to perform more arduous than gathering the daily supply of wood and transporting it to camp.

PRIMITIVE METHODS

Of the primitive methods of taking food, a few have been practiced by boys up to very recent times. One of these was stone-throwing; and almost up to the present time, in autumn, when blackbirds were abundant, little boys killed them by throwing stones at the thick flocks. In recent times, too, a man was occasionally found who possessed especial skill in stone-throwing. Such a man was Strong Left Hand, who died in 1905, more than eighty years of age. Stories of his skill and success by this primitive means were told and wondered at in both sections of the tribe. These are some examples of his achievements with the stone that he related to me. He said:

"I was on a warpath, and we had been shooting at buffalo. They had started to run, and as the last one was going by I ran ahead of it, and as I did so, picked up a stone from the ground. As I got in the buffalo's way, it charged me, and raised its tail, showing that it was angry. Just before it reached me, I threw the stone and hit it in the forehead, and it fell over, dead.

"Once, when I was out on the prairie with Sleeping Rabbit, I killed an antelope with a stone. I was lying on a hill watching, and the antelope was coming toward me, and stopped to nibble at some brush. I threw the stone just as the antelope raised its head, hitting it on the head and killing it.

"One morning a man was trying to catch one of his horses that was hard to catch and would not let anyone get near it. The man who owned it had been trying for a long time to catch it, and when I passed he was angry and called out to me, 'Friend, kill that horse for me!' I picked up a piece of bone that was lying on the prairie, and threw it at the horse, which was about fifty yards off, and struck it on the head and killed it.

"Once there was an eagle's nest in the cliff near where we were camped. It was high up on the rocks, and could not be reached either from above or from below. Sits In The Night came to me and said: 'Friend, there is an eagle's nest here that I cannot get at. I want

the eagle. Will you go and kill it for me?"The nest was too high above the prairie to be reached by a stone, and it could not be seen from the top of the cliff above it. So when I went there I knew I should be obliged to wait until the eagle flew out, and by the time the bird came in sight it would be a long way from me—a long throw. When I crept up to the cliff, the bird must have heard me, for it flew out, and I let fly the stone, and hit it, and killed it, and it fell to the ground dead."

Anciently, no doubt, stone-throwing was a constantly employed and successful way of killing game. The enormous abundance of food animals and birds, and their tameness in those primitive times, make it altogether probable that men possessing anything like Strong Left Hand's accuracy of aim and his power might kill much game by this means of hunting. Many men employed this method of killing game, and of these, many no doubt became skillful and successful stone-throwers.

Until the old free life was broken up, the little boys, to secure feathers, employed an old hunting custom, now almost forgotten. It was practiced by boys of from ten to fifteen or sixteen years to kill crows and magpies for their feathers, or food birds that might happen to alight near where the hunters were hidden. This was usually on some open space near which stood small trees. More often than not it was on the bank of a river, or on some old sandbar or island in the river; at all events, where there were clumps of willow brush with open spaces among them. In these clumps of bushes the boys lay hidden. If clumps of willows were not found in a convenient situation, they cut willow branches and thrust the butts in the ground in a small circle, bringing the tops together above a shallow hole scooped out in the sand, and tying them there. A door was left for entrance, and for this door a cover was woven of coarse grass. When the hunter entered the place of concealment—the "blind"—he pulled down the door behind him. Often four or five such shelters were built in a row thirty or forty feet apart, each to be occupied by a hunter.

On the little trees and bushes they hung scraps of hide and the trimmings of buffalo-ropes, and on the ground where the birds were expected to come were scattered pieces of tallow, up to within a few feet of the shelter. This bait was renewed every day. Not far from the shelter, and where the bait was scattered, little forked sticks were set in the ground in pairs, and the forks of each pair supported a crossbar on which the birds might alight. In the front of the shelter,

looking toward the bait, an opening thinly covered with grass was left to shoot through.

After getting into his shelter, which he did before daylight, each boy kept very quiet, and sat watching and ready to shoot, the point of the arrow he was to discharge protruding through the grass. The arrows were either blunt-headed or perhaps had sharpened wood points, and when the birds flew down to eat the bait, they were within close range. The boys did not leave their shelters to collect the birds that they killed, nor did they make any noise which might alarm the other birds. Even if a wounded bird flew off a short distance, he who had shot it did not go out in pursuit. After the other birds had flown away, however, as they always did when the sun got high, the boys went out and gathered up what they had killed, and went home.

With the advent of the horse, metal, and the gun, the primitive means of taking food began to be supplanted by the new and more effectual methods. The enclosure into which some food animals were driven was gradually abandoned; the snares with which they caught others were given up; stone-throwing was no longer practiced, and people ceased to lie in wait for animals to come to them, since now on horseback they could overtake these animals, kill them, and transport the capture to camp.

BUFFALO HUNTING

The camp moved about from place to place, following the buffalo; and, as a result of the habits of these animals, a set of tribal laws had grown up to govern the hunt. Since the Cheyennes depended on the buffalo for food, it was obviously necessary that the hunting should be organized; in order first, that large quantities of food might be killed at one time; and second, and more important, that the animals which were to furnish this food should not be disturbed or frightened and so driven beyond the reach of the people. No doubt the laws governing this hunting developed slowly, but they long existed. Their utility was generally recognized, and they were supported by public opinion. Their enforcement was in the hands of the soldier bands of the camp, who rigidly carried them out.

When buffalo were plenty, small parties or single individuals were not permitted to chase the buffalo alone. There was no individual hunting. When one man hunted buffalo, all joined in the chase. Anyone

found going out alone and running buffalo was severely whipped by the soldiers, with quirts, ramrods, or bows. If he were obstinate, and persisted in disobeying the law, they might cut up his lodge, chop up the poles, and perhaps even kill his horses, this of course being the equivalent of a fine, more or less heavy. Men who violated the law were sometimes beaten until they could hardly walk, and could not get about for several days. When the camp moved up near the mountains, into a country where deer and elk were plentiful, and where there were only a few buffalo-bulls, each man was free to hunt as he pleased; but such a hunter, if he came upon buffalo in numbers, did not disturb them, for he knew it was wrong to do so—not just to the other people of the camp.

The chiefs decided when the buffalo surround was to be made. They gave their orders to the soldiers, and from that time forward the soldiers had charge of the hunt. The day before the surround, it was cried through the village that on the morrow all would chase buffalo. I have frequently described the operation of killing buffalo with the bow and arrow; and the method pursued by the Cheyennes was not markedly different from that practiced by other Plains tribes. In the different stories told in this book, examples are given of the way in which buffalo hunting was practiced.

An old-time method of killing buffalo among the Cheyennes was with the lance. The rider usually ran up on the right side of the animal, and held the lance across his body, the right hand the higher. The buffalo was a little ahead of the horse, and the man, using both hands, thrust with his lance downward and forward. When the buffalo felt the prick of the lance, it usually ran still faster. Sometimes it tried to turn to charge, but as the man held the lance against it, and pressed it into its side, the buffalo always gave way, and ran on. Sometimes the lance-point might strike a rib, and the man was obliged to make a second thrust. Perhaps the first thrust hurried the buffalo along, so that the man fell behind; but he whipped up his horse, and again got near enough. Often, instead of thrusting for the heart, they thrust down for the kidneys, so striving to break down and cripple the animal. The lance was more commonly used in earlier days than it was after sheet-iron arrowheads and firearms were procured, yet it was used by war-parties in modern times, i.e., from 1865 to 1875 or 1880.

I have often adverted to the power of the bow, and the Cheyennes were good bowmen. The older men

tell me that the bow was an effective weapon—that is to say, a killing weapon—up to from three to four hundred yards. This refers to the use of the weapon in war. In chasing buffalo, if the dart entered at the right point, the Cheyenne killed his buffalo with a single arrow. Big Ribs, a Northern Cheyenne at Pine Ridge, and Strong Left Hand, at Tongue River Agency, are known each to have shot one arrow through two buffalo, killing both at a single shot. Strong Left Hand's bow was very powerful, and few men could bend it. Walks At Night, also called Wrinkled Wolf, who had once chased a buffalo-cow which stopped to fight, shot an arrow entirely through her, so that it went on and then stood free in the ground beyond her.

In a number of instances men, in the chase, have killed buffalo with their butcher knives. This was done by a friend, who held the knife in his right hand, ran up close beside a cow, and thrust the blade several times into her flank.

Big Ribs, when chasing buffalo on one occasion, sprang from his horse to the back of a bull, and, while riding it, cut out a kidney through the flank. This was done about the year 1870, and merely as an act of bravado—to show what he could do.

Driving the Buffalo, an Old Time Method

In the old days, when buffalo were killed close to the camp, the women and children all went out to them, to assist in securing the meat. The men who had been killing buffalo would ask a child, often a mere baby, if it had ever before been present at a chase, and if it had not, would take a handful of blood and smear it all over its face. The children were not permitted to wash off this blood until they had returned to the camp.

In the olden time, before they had horses, the Cheyennes—as so often told of other Indians—made foot surrounds of the buffalo,² and also drove them into pens. Such enclosures were usually built under a cutbank or bluff, which formed one or more walls of the pen; the other sides were merely bushes or branches stuck in the ground. From the entrance of the pen diverging lines of bushes, like the wings of a chute, extended out on the plains.³ The Indians partly enticed and partly drove the buffalo between the

² Compare LePage duPratz, vol. III (Paris, 1758), p. 210.

³ Compare Umfreville, *Present State of Hudson's Bay* (London, 1790), p. 160.



Buffalo hunt, Hidatsa; painting by George Catlin

wings, which guided them into the enclosure. Though the animals might readily break through the walls of bushes, they seldom did so, for they were afraid of them, and merely ran round and round within the enclosure until exhausted. Meantime the Indians closed in on them, and began to shoot them down with arrows. Usually most of those in the pen were killed, though often a few broke through the lines and escaped. It is perhaps better to give the account of these hunting methods received from an old Cheyenne; an account which no doubt is substantially correct, and may well enough have come to this man from people who had learned the methods through practice.

The statement that the changes in customs and the improvements in methods were revealed to men in their dreams, is merely his method of explaining the order and manner in which these changes took place. The Cheyennes are firm believers in dreams. Like the prophets of old, they often received in sleep suggestions from supernatural sources—were warned in a dream. Such visions, the Indian says, are sent to tell us what is going to happen, and the warning which they convey must be obeyed. This is White Hawk's relation:

“In those days the arrowpoint was made of stone.

There were birds, and so they got feathers for their arrows in order that they should fly straight. Men were always out from the camp looking for food. When any of these men found a herd of buffalo, twenty or thirty or forty, he returned to the camp and reported to the chief. Then all who had bows and arrows made ready, and went with these men to near where the buffalo were, and there formed a big circle as far as possible from the buffalo, but entirely surrounding them. The side of the circle to the leeward of the buffalo, and the two other sides across the wind were formed first. The windward side was formed last. Then the men began to close in on the buffalo, until, as the circle grew smaller, the hunters were closer together. When the buffalo began to smell the people, they ran away; but those toward whom they ran would yell and toss their robes, and the buffalo turned, looking for another place, and from being always turned back they were soon running in a circle. When the hunters got pretty close, all the most active young men—those who had strong arms to pull the bow, and who could shoot straightest—ran in close to the buffalo and began shooting their arrows at them, while the buffalo were running round in a circle, not trying to break through the line of the people. The old men say that

in this way they sometimes killed a whole herd, none of them breaking out. At times a few would break out and get away, but often all were killed.

“The people had dogs, and when the buffalo were skinned and cut up, they packed meat on their dogs, and then every man, woman, and child able to walk carried a pack to camp. They left nothing behind, but carried everything in. Even the bones were carried in, and the entrails, for buffalo were hard to get and were had only occasionally, and the people felt that nothing was to be wasted or left behind.

“Later, after they had learned to surround the buffalo in this way, some old man was told in a dream of another and better way. That he should take the wing of some large bird, perhaps an eagle and perhaps some other big bird, and that the people should take their lodges up on the prairie and pitch them in a circle, leaving an opening at one side. When the buffalo were close, two old men, each carrying one of these large wings, should go out toward the buffalo and wave the wings in the air, beckoning to the animals, and that these would come toward them. They did this, and as the buffalo came toward them, the men moved away and the buffalo followed, and so the men led them right into the circle of the lodges, where the people killed them. The buffalo seemed to be gentle and did not run, but stood about, waiting to be killed.”

Such were some of the primitive methods of taking buffalo, when they first hunted them on the prairie; but long ago, in the North, before they reached the plains, and when they lived in a country of heavy snowfall, they followed them in winter on snowshoes and chased them into snowdrifts in ravines. When they had driven buffalo into such drifts, they set the dogs free to worry them, and ran up and killed them with the lance, in the manner figured by Catlin, and described for killing moose in the *Jesuit Relations* and in Perrot.⁴ This, the old men tell us today, was the easiest and most successful of the old methods.

Near some of the places where the Cheyennes brought the buffalo into a pound or enclosure and killed them, there were formerly to be seen piles of heaped up buffalo-horns. Remains of such piles of buffalo-horns used to be seen at a point west of the Black Hills in the latter part of the last century, but must long since have disappeared.

Dangers of the Hunt

The dangers of the modern buffalo hunt to the men who practiced it have been described in another volume.⁵ They were many, and almost every year a few men were killed in hunting. One danger, not commonly recognized because unusual except at one season of the year, was the pugnacity of the bulls, and their occasional pertinacity in pursuing men.

The rutting season was in June and July, and then the buffalo-bulls, when chased, were often ready to fight. Many years ago a bull followed Four Bulls five miles before the man managed to get out of sight behind a hill, when the bull stopped.

Wolf Chief described a similar experience: “In the spring of 1868 I set out with a boy to hunt buffalo. We had four horses, two to ride and two led horses to pack. We had gone ten or twelve miles from camp when on looking over a hill I saw buffalo, and we changed to our running horses. A herd of cows was near us, and beyond them a herd of bulls. This was in May, when the buffalo were shedding their coats. I was riding a sorrel horse, captured in Texas, which was very fast. The country, on the head of the Washita where we were, is level. Our camp was on the Beaver, above where Fort Supply is now. I had two pistols, each with six loads, and the boy had a bow and arrows.

“I said to the boy, ‘Do you kill some calves, and I will kill some of the larger buffalo.’ I rode fast down to the herd of cows, and they started to run, and soon I shot three. When the cows began to run, the bulls started too, and ran after the cows, and I thought that I would kill one or two bulls, for in May they are fat—much fatter than the cows.

“I raced up to the herd, and shot a fine four-year-old bull that had large smooth horns. Then I rode on to another bull, and shot it. When I rode up to the second bull I turned in ahead of the first one, and after the second one had fallen with a broken back, I looked behind me and saw the first bull coming. A little blood was dropping from its mouth, and I thought it was badly hit.

“I turned my horse to finish it, and rode alongside and shot it again. When I fired, the bull turned away, and I supposed that I had not hit it in the right place, and rode on after it to shoot again, when suddenly the

⁴ Blair, *Indian Tribes of Upper Mississippi Valley, etc.*, vol. I, p. 107.

⁵ *American Big Game Hunting* (N. Y.: Forest and Stream Publishing Co., 1893), p. 195.

bull made a short turn and rushed toward me. I shot at it, but it still came on. I turned my horse in one direction and another, trying to avoid it and get out of sight, but the bull followed every turn I made, and I saw that it was going to chase me.

“The boy, Little Bear, was a long way off, and I did not ride toward him because his horse was not very fast. I turned and tried to run away from the bull, but he came on, running fast, and kept following. He came after me, sometimes going slowly, and then suddenly would begin to run fast and try to catch up to me. He seemed to measure his gait by that of the horse.

“Several times I turned about and shot at the animal, but I do not think I hit him. I did not fire the last two loads in my pistol; I saved them in case my horse should be run down. It was a busy ride. With one eye I was obliged to keep watching the bull, and at the same time it was necessary to look out for holes in the prairie. If my horse had stepped in a hole, and had fallen, that would have been the end of me.

“Above the river, where the village was, there is a hill, and when I reached the top of this hill, looking over toward the camp, I kept right on, but the bull, surprised at what he saw, stopped, and stood looking down toward the big camp. Soon he began to belch and paw the ground, thrust his horns into it, and throw the dirt on his back. After he had done this for a little while, he turned about and went straight back as he had come. My horse was wet with sweat, and staggering from fatigue.

“I went down to the camp and got a fresh horse, and started back to where I had left the boy. When I reached the place, I found Little Bear up on a hill looking for me. He said to me, ‘I saw the bull close to you, and I made up my mind that he had killed you.’”

ELK, DEER, AND WILD SHEEP

According to tradition, the Cheyennes, when they lived in the timber in the East, used to surround the elk and the deer, and sometimes drive them into enclosures. This has been known as a practice of some forest tribes since the seventeenth century.⁶ They say, too, that in ancient times when they found, in the timber, a place where an elk trail passed under a tree, they tied a rope of rawhide or sinew to a branch, arranging the rope so that the noose would hang down

⁶ Baron de Lahontan, *New Voyages to North America*, vol. I (London, 1703), p. 65.

over the trail at about the height of an elk's head. If an elk in passing ran its head into the noose and became frightened, it gave a quick jump, drew the rope tight, and so was strangled. Obviously, if elk were trapped in this way, deer, moose, and caribou were also thus taken in the ancient days when they lived in the timber to the eastward.

This tradition is well founded. The Cheyennes of modern times on the plains, when they tell of snaring elk, speak, of course, of the only large deer which they know. They have no tradition of the moose, nor of the caribou. These animals have been forgotten.

Deer were usually shot with arrows, something that was not difficult, since in old times they were very numerous, seldom frightened, easily approached, and the arrow made no noise. We may presume that the animal shot at, if wounded, did not connect its hurt with the hunter, even if it saw him.

In the country which the Cheyennes occupied in ancient times there were no wild sheep, and it was only after they had reached the plains that they met with these animals where they were very numerous, and very unsuspecting and gentle. Of all the larger food animals they are said to have been the easiest to kill—less shy, even, than the buffalo. Moreover, they were exceedingly abundant in many places, as, for example, on the prairie, near the bad lands of all the streams running through the northern plains country, and about the high buttes that rise from the prairie. In the bluffs along the Yellowstone, White River, the branches of the Cheyenne River, and along the Little Missouri, as well as in the Black Hills as recently as 1860-1870 sheep were very plentiful and were usually killed with arrows.

ANTELOPE

Few people today realize that in old times the antelope in their range were probably more abundant than the buffalo. They were found in vast numbers over all the plains, but because of their small size and inconspicuous coloring, they did not impress those who saw them as did the black herds of the larger animals. The Cheyenne captured antelope in great numbers, leading them into enclosures as they did the buffalo. The methods by which this was done varied, for each man who possessed the mysterious power to accomplish the work exercised that power in his own way.

The older people have always said that when the Cheyennes first came west of the Missouri River and



Starting on a hunt, Cheyenne; painting by George Catlin

had worked out toward the Black Hills, they found many antelope pits already existing along the different streams. What tribe had dug and used these pits is not known. The pits or ditches were usually found near where two branches of a stream came together. The wings—often bushes piled up close together—which guided the antelope toward the pit were built along the borders of these small streams. Behind the fences and the brush wings the men, women, children, and dogs lay hidden. Resting on the piles of brush at frequent intervals were poles with one end on the ground whose weight should hold down the brush. The Cheyennes repaired many of these old pits, and used them. In those days it was very easy to pit antelope, since they were enormously abundant and overran the whole country. It may be that it was from their neighbors the Kiowas that the Cheyennes learned how to catch antelope in pits.

The number of men and women still alive who have witnessed this method of securing antelope justifies the belief that it was in use up to the year 1870 or even later.

BEARS

The Cheyennes killed no grizzly bears on the plains for they feared them. That black bears were often killed, however, is shown by the frequent statements that the skin of the black bear was commonly used as a covering or wrapper for a shield.

She Bear told of the killing of a black bear that must have happened not long after 1860. While riding over the prairie with a friend of his own age, a bear came out of a ravine not far off. The two boys raced after it on horseback, overtook and shot it with arrows, and finally killed it.

Stories are told of man-eating grizzly bears, animals that habitually preyed on the people, lying in wait for and capturing them, and even driving large camps away from favorite camping places. Such stories go back to a time before the coming of the whites, for the acquisition of horses and of iron-pointed arrowheads tended to put the Indian more nearly on an equality with his brute enemy than he was when he traveled afoot and his piercing weapons were of stone. In primitive times every advantage was with the bear. It was swift of foot, enduring, and hard to kill. Its tough muscles, heavy fur, strong hide, and thick coating of fat were hardly to be pierced by the primitive arrow.

HORSES

While in later years the Cheyennes secured their horses chiefly by capture from their enemies, in earlier days—say in the latter part of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth centuries—they captured many wild horses. There were professional horse-chasers, who devoted much time to this work, and who possessed swift and enduring horses, which were kept always in good training, so that they should be strong, tough, and long-winded.

The first horses on the recent plains were brought by Coronado, who, on his march from Mexico to Quivira in Kansas, penetrated almost to the Missouri River, and not very long before this the mounted troops of De Soto had crossed the Mississippi and come almost to the edge of the plains. No doubt horses were lost by both expeditions, and those that thus escaped found themselves in a favorable environment, in which there were no natural enemies. Since there was nothing to check their increase, they multiplied astonishingly. As early as 1680 there were horses among the Pawnees and other tribes of the Missouri, and from that time on horses spread with great rapidity from south to north.

The Spaniards in Mexico possessed great herds, and while many of them were branded, many escaped the iron and became truly wild. These wild horses were captured by the Spaniards in various ways, usually in corrals toward which the horses were driven between diverging wings until they entered the pen. They were seldom run down and captured with the rope. The Kiowas followed the practice of penning wild horses employed by the Spaniards, but among

the Cheyennes I find no tradition of any such method of taking horses.

The Cheyennes did not become expert in the use of the lasso, or reata, employed by Mexicans and cowboys before the second half of the nineteenth century. They used the slip-noose, to be sure, but did not throw the rope. Their method was to hold the loop open by tying it with light strings to a hoop formed of a long willow twig, which was passed over the head of the wild horse, if the rider could come close enough to do this.

A further development of the use of the slip-noose was a change by which the rider carried a light pole, to which the loop of the rope was attached by strings, so that this loop might be passed over the head of the horse. It was probably not until after the year 1850 that the horse-chasers learned to throw the rope with much success.

It will readily be understood that, provided things were otherwise nearly equal, a horse running free could not be overtaken by one that was carrying a hundred and fifty or two hundred pounds of weight, and from this it follows that the horses captured were chiefly old and slow ones, and that the best horses always escaped. For this reason a favorite season for chasing wild horses was toward the end of the winter or in early spring, when, through insufficient food and cold weather, a proportion of the wild herds had become thin and weak. The horse-chasers, on the other hand, watched their running horses with care and endeavored to keep them in good condition, and at this season it was not difficult for them to overtake mares that were thin from suckling their colts, or those that were heavy with foal.

When the wild horse had been caught, the work was only half done. It was necessary that the animal should be kept from running away, and yet the men of the party could not be constantly occupied in watching the horses. This difficulty was overcome by the device of taking with them on their expeditions for horses a number of gentle mares to be used in handling the wild horses when first taken. Some of these gentle mares were commonly driven out on the chase. The captured wild horse was choked down, thrown to the ground, and its feet tied. A head-stall, or hackamore, was put on its head, a rope tied about the neck with a knot that would not run up, and the rope passed down through the head-stall. A gentle mare was then brought up, and after a knot had been tied in her tail,

the rope leading from the wild horse's head was tied about the mare's tail with a slack of three or four feet between the head and the tail. To keep the struggling wild horse from injuring the mare during its first efforts to escape, her tail was bent around to one side and the loose end of the rope was passed along her side to the base of the neck, where it was tied about the neck just in front of the shoulders by a knot that could not draw up. To prevent this large loop from slipping forward, it was tied to the mare's mane, just above the withers, by a deer-skin string.

The feet of the wild horse were now untied. When it sprang up it plunged and struggled for a time, but soon became quiet and thereafter followed the mare without trouble. Three or four days later, when it had come to know the mare well and perhaps to be attached to her, it was set free, and thereafter followed her about wherever she went. The mare was then used to tame another horse, and if the party was out for a long time some mares might have eight or ten captured horses following them about. These wild horses were readily broken to the saddle.

While they were "tailed" to the mare, the owner would occasionally go up to the mare, pat her for a little while, and then pass on to the young horse, handling it and gentling it. In this way it became accustomed to the sight and smell of man, and no longer feared him. Sometimes after the horse had become somewhat gentle, a young man would spring on its back and at once jump off again. The wild horse soon learned that it was not to be hurt. The man who mounted would presently sit on the horse for a little while, and then the old mare might be led about by someone while the young man was sitting on the wild horse's back. Thus the work of breaking it to ride was not long.

The wild horses ran on the prairie in bands of from thirty to fifty mares and young animals, all of them under the leadership of some old stallion who kept them together and drove intruders away. Such an old stallion drove out of the herd all of the young colts, two, three, and four years old, and these were often found on the prairie by themselves in considerable herds. Indian horse-catchers, if such a herd of young horses was seen—and they were readily recognized by their shorter manes and tails, and light frames—often drove out toward such a company a few gentle mares, when the wild horses usually ran toward and mingled with them, and after a time the herd could be approached, driven together, and perhaps many of

the young horses caught. If it were practicable to give them time to become acquainted with the old, gentle mares, they often did not attempt to run away, and many of them were captured.

BEAVER

Until intercourse with white men had taught them that the skins of beaver had a value for trading purposes, the Cheyennes made no systematic effort to trap these animals. They killed them for food and used the skins for clothing, and they trained dogs to hunt them.

When a beaver-dam and houses were found, it was the practice to break away the dam so as to lower the water about the houses, and then to find the hole by which the beaver entered the house or the bank. The dogs used were small enough to enter this hole and yet were of fair size. A dog, sent into the hole, found the beaver and barked at and worried it until it became angry, so that it fought back and finally followed the dog out. As the dog gradually backed away, barking at the beaver, it made short rushes at him, and finally the dog backed clear out of the hole, and when the beaver jumped out after the dog, the man standing there knocked the beaver on the head with a club. They also shot beaver with arrows, watching for them by their ponds; and in the same way they occasionally shot otter. The fur of the otter was highly valued for covering for bow-cases and quivers, and for hair wrapping.

GRAY WOLVES

Big wolves were caught in pitfalls, made so deep that the animals could not jump out, the sides being dug away toward the bottom, so that the hole at top was somewhat smaller than the width at the bottom, which was about six feet. On opposite sides of the opening of this hole, two pairs of stakes were driven in the ground, two inches or more apart, and between these stakes on either side, and reaching across the hole, was laid a pole to which a bait of small pieces of meat was tied. The horizontal pole at either end was lashed to the two stakes between which it lay, and thus could not be moved.

Large weed stalks were split and laid close together from the pole to the ground on either side, and over these grass and earth were scattered, so that the covering of the pit looked as nearly as possible like

the ground about it. The wolf, attracted by the bait, ventured out on the split weeds, which broke with his weight and let him fall into the pit, either as he was reaching for the bait or leaving it.

FOXES

Except for purposes of ornamentation, the old-time Cheyennes made little use of small furs. For clothing, shelter, and bedding they used the skins of large animals. Nevertheless, they trapped foxes in deadfalls.

In constructing the trap a little trench was dug in the ground, and over it was built a small house of willow twigs, thrust in the ground on either side of the trench and bent in a half-circle. Over these twigs was put grass, and then earth, and on the earth were placed the thorny leaves of the prickly-pear (*Opuntia*), so that the fox should not dig nor scratch at the roof of the house, which was open only at one end. Leading up to the little door of the house a fence was built on either side of the trench, and at the door a deadfall of ordinary type was arranged, the fall log and the bottom log being lodge-poles. The bait was a bit of tallow slightly roasted, and placed on a spindle inside the house. A pull at the bait dislodged the spindle and the supporting stick (called *mō wīsh kūn'*, finger), and the log fell on the fox's neck or back, killing it.

After a trap had been set, the person who had made it often went off to one side a little distance and sang, calling the foxes. Sometimes when one of these traps was first made, the women and children would gather around the singer and dance to the time of the song, the words of which ran as follows:

Come, fox, I have meat for you—*Ni nāi' is mā hō' is tām' i na' hīt hō ē' wō*

Come, fox, I have food for you—*Ni nāi' is mā hō' is tām' i na' hīt*

Come, fox, I have food for you—*Ni nāi' is mā hō' is tām' i na' hīt.*

EAGLES

The feathers from the tail of the eagle were highly valued for use in adornment and for trade with other tribes, and at the proper season of the year some men devoted much effort to catching the birds. This, however, might not be done by everyone, for the eagle catchers were regarded as possessing much spiritual power. They alone might make the eagle medicine.

Eagles were the only birds in connection with the killing of which there was a ceremony.

Eagle catching was practiced in the spring, when the birds first appeared, and again in the fall, when they were going south. Only certain people engaged in this work—chiefly old men—those who had ceased going on the warpath. The young men who wore war-bonnets rarely caught eagles themselves, but procured the feathers from the old men. While engaged in the work of eagle catching, these old men used only one certain vessel to drink from in the evening, and this vessel no one else might use. At this time these men were obliged to keep to some extent apart, and were not allowed to touch even their own children; each one slept by himself.

Each man had his own method, and each thought his own way the best. The Cheyennes always declared that they were the most successful eagle catchers, and that after them came the Arapahoes. Two or three of the different methods practiced by men who were well known as eagle catchers are given here.

A man who wished to catch eagles for the first time offered the pipe to one who understood this, and by him was taught the secrets of the work. One who intended to go out to catch eagles made his preparations in his lodge, alone. The lodge was cleared out and the floor about the fire was covered—not very thickly—with white sage, the stems pointing away from the fire. While the eagle catcher was making his medicine, the fire was burning brightly, and he sang alone in the lodge all through the night.

After he had made the medicine, he left the camp without telling where he was going. In a suitable place on a hill he dug a pit large enough for a man to sit in with outstretched legs, but not long enough for lying down. Often the pit was small at the top, but hollowed out under the sides. He carried the earth from this pit far away, and scattered it. He covered the narrow hole by laying across it lengthwise a pole, to which was tied long grass, which hung over on each side and concealed the hole. Spaces through which he could look were left in this grass, or sticks covered with grass were put over the opening of the pit.

The digging of the pit was a work of time, for eagles are keen-sighted and wise, and the earth and rubbish must be carried a long distance. Before going into the pit, the eagle catcher took a sweat-bath, so as to dispel the human odor. He went to the pit for four successive days, and on the evening of the fourth day,

when he returned to his lodge, he took four sweat-baths.

The bait, tied down so that it should not be carried off, was often a fresh wolf skin to which a piece of the meat was attached, laid flesh side up across the sticks; or it might be a rabbit. The sticks laid across the mouth of the pit were far enough apart so that the hands might be passed between them. The floor of the pit was covered with white sage, which men carried up in their blankets from the lower ground. Very early in the morning, before he started to go to the pit, the man combed his hair and painted himself all over with red greasepaint, the grease being the fat of eagles. He set out long before daylight so as to be there before the eagles were moving about.

After all had been made ready, the man went to the place and entered the hole while it was still dark. When in the pit he did not eat or drink. He must go for four successive days. If he tried for four days without success, he thought that some mistake had been made—that the laws had not been properly followed. He had with him a small rope of buffalo hair to be used to kill the eagle by strangling it. Some people used a bow-string for this purpose, while others merely broke the eagle's neck. The man sat in the hole and waited for the eagles to come. Perhaps a bird flying over saw the bait and kept circling about it, getting lower and lower.

Until it began to eat, the eagle was very cautious, hovering around the bait, stretching out first one foot and then the other, before alighting. The man heard its feet strike when it alighted, and while the eagle was tearing at the bait the man very slowly reached up through the grass and grasped the bird by the feet. He pulled it into the pit, slipped over the head the noose of the rope, or a bowstring tied to his foot so that he could pull strongly, and killed it by strangling. Men have been known to catch as many as twenty eagles in one of these pits, and to have caught several in one day. Once a man named Wolf Fire got hold of an eagle so large that it nearly pulled him out of the pit.

When a man had caught as many birds as he needed, he stopped. After this he began to pluck the feathers from the birds, taking only those from the tails and the wings. He put the feathers away, carried the bodies off a long way from camp, placed them on the ground side by side in a row, and left them there. The feathers he gave to the people, who gave him something in return, perhaps a horse for twenty or thirty feathers.

This method of eagle catching was not without its dangers. It is related that an eagle once killed a Sioux Indian by piercing an artery in his arm with its talons, so that the man bled to death.

Another method practiced in the early part of the nineteenth century was described by Ridge Bear, who had it from his mother, who was born before 1820. When a man purposed to catch eagles, he, with his family, moved away from the main camp, put up his lodge wherever he had decided to stop, and near it put up another lodge. The floor of the second lodge was smoothed and leveled, and all around its border next to the lodge covering was spread a nice bed of white sage. This lodge was for the eagles that he expected to catch: they were to be placed on the bed of sage, with the heads pointing toward the fireplace. The man prepared a number of balls of pounded corn and a number of balls of pounded meat, and these were placed about the edge of the bed in pairs—a ball of meat and a ball of meal together—as many pairs of balls as he hoped to catch eagles.

The man greased his whole body with eagle fat so as to conceal the human scent. He entered the pit in the morning before daylight and remained there until after sundown.

In the evening when he returned from the pit with the eagles he had caught, he called to his family as he approached the camp and told them to enter the eagles' lodge. He went in and placed his eagles on the bed of sage, the head of each one being near a pair of the balls of food. Then to each one of his family the man gave a mouthful of food from two of the balls. The family then left the lodge and the man remained there for the night. Four days were spent thus in eagle catching, and at the end of this time the man moved to the main camp with his eagles.

Some eagle catchers, especially those beginning the work, did not offer the eagles food when they brought them in. They were laid in a place by themselves. He who had killed them took a pipe and held it to each bird, asking it to take pity on him. This was in his own lodge, which had been cleaned out and the floor covered with white sage. Every time he caught birds, he called in the old eagle catchers who had taught him, and filled his pipe and offered it to each bird, saying: "I did not kill you without thought [i.e., without a reason]. We want to wear you." Food and water were then passed into the lodge, and one of the old eagle catchers put medicine on the food. After that the novice drank the water, then ate, and



Fish weir, Kootenai River, British Columbia, unknown tribe

did not drink again before he started out before daylight the next day. Before sleeping, he removed the feathers and piled them up in his lodge, but took out the bodies and left them a long way off. The feathers were not touched again till he had finished his four days' hunt. Then he divided the wing-feathers among those whom he wished to have them. The old men used wings for fans. There were always many buyers for the tail-feathers.

The old method of eagle catching began to pass out of use when the Cheyennes obtained guns. It has not been extensively practiced for about three generations, but was in common use by the grandfathers of the old men of the present day in the early part of the last century. The last man who ever used one of the pits was Red Wolf, who died in 1893. Since about 1860-1861 such pits have not been used much, if at all. The people say they came to fear the practice, and abandoned it.

FISH

The Cheyennes formerly caught fish, and in this respect were quite unlike some of their neighbors on the plains. It may be conjectured that they brought from their earlier eastern home their fondness for fish, as

well as the methods which they employed in taking them. A story describing the earliest fish catching practice treats of a period long, long ago, but after the people had obtained bows and arrows:

A long time ago a man and his wife who were traveling alone far from the main camp had almost nothing to eat. The woman dug roots and gathered berries when she could find any, and the man hunted hard and tried to kill either game or birds, but they were near starvation, for they found little to eat. They were camped by a small stream, and, as the man was walking along the bank one day, he saw something dart through the water. He looked again, and saw fish, many little ones, and some big—half as long as his arm. When he returned to camp he spoke to his wife about this, telling her that he had seen fish in the stream. He said, "If we could catch some of these fish, then we should have something to eat."

He thought much about this, and at last decided what to do. He went to where willow bushes grew near the camp, and cut many small, slender shoots, which he took to camp. Then he and his wife tied these sticks close together, and made something like a back-rest, long enough to reach across the stream, which was only two or three steps wide and about half a leg deep. Then he said to his wife, "Come now, take



Brave Bear

one end of this and we will go to the stream.” When they had got there he said to her: “Now, let us put the edge of this into the water so that it reaches the bottom, and then drag it slowly up the creek. The water is shallow, and if any fish come against it, we will try to catch them.”

As they went along they watched for fish, and if one got against the willows near the woman, she reached over very slowly and grasped it and threw it out on the bank. If one got against the willows on the man’s side, he did the same. In this way they caught many fish—all they wanted. They pulled the willow net out of the water, and the man said: “All! in this way we can live. We can catch fish. We will save this and keep it.” They went to camp with their fish.⁷

Standing All Night, the aged man who died in 1869, used to tell how the Cheyennes subsisted before they reached the buffalo country. At certain seasons they were accustomed to make journeys to some great lakes, which constantly appear in their traditions. These lakes were so large that one could not see across them to the other side, and in their waters were many fish, some of them quite large. It was their practice to make nets of willow twigs tied together with strings of bark and sinew, and to stretch them out diagonally from the shore into the shallow water. These nets were often very long. Men stationed along the net held it in place, and other men, with women and children, went farther along the shore of the lake and entered the water in a line, some of them going out as deep as they could go, and walked toward the net, driving the fish before them. When they reached the outer end of the net, it was slowly moved in toward the shore, enclosing a large space; then it was gradually dragged up into the very shallow water, and men, women, and children got within it and threw the fish out on shore. In this way they commonly caught many fish, some of them very large, possibly sturgeon. After being secured, these fish were carried to the camp on the backs of people, or packed on the dog travois. The larger fish were cut in pieces before they could be put on the travois. In the camp they were dried in the sun, the larger ones being cut in strips. The bones of the larger fish were pounded and boiled for grease, just as in later days buffalo bones were pounded and boiled. From the largest of these fish they got a white sinew.

In modern times they caught fish in a pound or pen made of willow saplings. Such a pen was built by the direction and under the charge of a medicine man, who during the night, when the fish were expected to enter it, remained in his lodge, not going out. His face was painted red, and his robe was drawn up over his head so that he was wholly covered and could see nothing. All night he sat alone and silent in his lodge.

The people who built the fish-weir drove into the ground in the stream-bed willow saplings as thick as a man’s wrist, and fastened them together with strings of rawhide. The saplings were in a circle as close together as possible, an opening or gate being left on the upstream side. The weir was ready for the reception of the fish in the evening. Pieces of meat to serve as bait were laid in the water at the back of the weir.

A man was appointed especially to watch this trap. While it was building he took willow twigs, and from them wove a sort of oval basket about twenty inches long, and eight inches in diameter, with a hole about six inches in diameter in one end; to the other end were fastened two short willow sticks which served as handles for the basket. In the morning, after daylight, the man went to the trap and looked about its walls to find a place where he could work his hand and arm in between the willow saplings, so as to feel whether there were any fish inside. If he felt fish, he called the people to come. Then taking the basket, he went to the lower part of the weir and squeezed the saplings apart, so as to leave an open space, against which he put the opening of the basket. The fish began to come out through the opening in the walls, and to pass into the basket. From that the man took them in his hand and threw them out to the people on the bank. As long as he could get fish, he kept throwing them out on the bank. Sometimes he might be at it all day long. Such traps have been used, certainly later than the year 1860, to capture suckers and whitefish in the Laramie River.⁸



⁷ Compare, as to the Pima, Lloyd *Aw aw Tam Indian Nights* (Westville, N. J., 1911), p. 60.

⁸ See also the chapter “The Boy and the Girl,” p. 29.



Top: Group of singers, unknown Cheyennes; Bottom: Wooden Leg and wife



SINGING AND INSTRUMENTS

ALL Indians are musical and some of their instruments will be described. These are generally used for keeping time. Most Indian music, however, is vocal, and men, women, and children sing. In fact, singing accompanies many operations of their daily life.

The Cheyennes have many songs prayers. These may have words or not. Some of them are used by the doctor while trying to heal his patient. There are mourning songs in praise of the dead, and describing the sorrow of the survivors; songs which are lullabies for children or for their amusement. Morning songs are hummed by men just after they have awakened and before they rise. The many dance songs are accompanied by the beat of the drum, which keeps time for the dancers. Besides these, there are songs of love, of war, and of adventure. Wolf songs, so called—said to have been learned from the wolves and perhaps remotely in imitation of the howling of these animals—are songs of travel, of roaming about, and were commonly sung by scouts or young men who were out looking for enemies, since a scout was called a “wolf.”

At the present day many of the religious songs have been forgotten except by the oldest men, since, as the old ceremonies are no longer practiced, the young men learn neither the ceremony nor the songs which go with it.

The wolf songs were sung by scouts, or by young men alone on the prairie, whether traveling or looking for enemies, or often, I am told, by men when they felt depressed, downhearted, lonely, or discouraged. It is perhaps for this reason that these songs contain frequent references to the singer’s sweetheart. On the other hand, the words of many of them seem to be addressed by a leader to his followers, in order to encourage them. Some of these songs are supposed to be sung by a girl, and addressed to her lover. Of these, one of the most pleasing, as well for its air as for its words, is the one beginning “*Tā mīs sī vā in*,” a translation of which is, “Put your arms around me, I am not looking,” and the meaning is, that if the girl saw that her lover was about to embrace her, she would feel

obliged to repulse him, but she wished him to put his arms around her, and now that she was not looking, he might do so without fear of rebuke. Another wolf war-song, supposed to be sung by a man traveling about, says: “My love, it is I who am singing. Do you hear me?” Another one, by a leader addressing his followers, says, “Take courage; do not be frightened; follow where you see me riding my white horse.” In another song by a leader to his followers, he says, “Friends, take courage, I see my sweetheart.” The view is, that the mention of the sweetheart’s name may bring him luck.

A man traveling alone, sang, “I do not see my love,” and then changing his address, went on, “Come out of your lodge, so that I may see you”; and again changing it, said, as he discovered her, “Aha, I do see you.” Still another runs, “My love, come out of the lodge, I am searching for you”; another, “My love, come out into the prairie, so that I may come near you and meet you”; and another, “My love, do not scold me, I love only you.” While these songs were commonly sung during a war journey, or even by people who are alone, away from the camp, they were sung also by young men who are sitting on the hills close to the village, and for no other purpose than their own amusement.

Often, young men about to start on a war journey went about the camp singing songs which were recognized as those sung by people about to go to war. They might march about the circle of the lodges, and stopping before certain of them, sing these songs. From the lodge which was being serenaded, contributions to their equipment were handed out, such as two or three pairs of moccasins, a few arrows, half a dozen balls, or a little packet of powder. Such a song is the following, “Call them together before we go away, and we will dance till morning.” This might be sung over and over many times as they marched through the camp. A party just leaving the village to go to war, might sing, “I am going to search for a man; if I find him, there will be fighting; perhaps he will kill me.” This was sung again and again as they rode over the hills from the camp.

A successful war party, returning to the village, sang, just as they descended the hills close to the



Display of dancing, unknown Cheyennes

camp, and until their people came out to meet them, a song of joy and triumph, "I have returned home; again I shall see my love." Or perhaps this, "All have returned alive; you all shall see your sweethearts"; and later, after they had come into the village, and perhaps were marching about it, such a song as this, "In the mountains I met with a man; I charged upon him and fought him and killed him, and took his scalp."

A warrior whose fortune while on the warpath had been bad, and who was therefore angry and discouraged, might sing, "My heart is angry, my love is lost." A dance song sung by the Fox Soldiers society had words which are in praise of youth, and to encourage valor, by pointing out the miseries of old age. They run as follows: "When a man gets old, his teeth are gone. I am afraid" (of that time), "I wish to die" (before it comes).

The doctoring songs are usually short and simple. The words are repeated over and over again, as in this one: "I know myself; I possess spiritual power." Another song, by a woman, says, "I know about things above; I possess spiritual power."

Beside all this, there are various animal songs, some of them religious, others merely invoking good fortune. A certain song, known as the horse song, may

be sung over a horse, in order to make him strong, sound, and swift, for a particular occasion.¹

THE DRUM

The drum was an important musical instrument, and was used in doctoring, dancing, gambling, and in religious ceremonies. Its chief function was to mark time. Drums were of varying sizes, running from those so small as to be held in the hand, to large ones which rested on the ground and about which five or six drummers might sit.

Hand drums were made of a green willow stick, three or four inches in diameter, shaved thin with a knife, then heated over the fire, greased, and worked until it was gradually bent into a circle whose ends overlapped. Notches were cut in the margins of the stick over the lapped ends, which were then bound together with strong sinew. The hair was scraped from an old horse-hide (which was thought to make the best drums), and this, after having been thoroughly wetted, was bound tightly over the wooden ring, cov-

¹ Twenty years ago I recorded in the *American Anthropologist*, N.S. vol. V, No. 2, p. 312, a number of these songs.

ering the upper side. From the lower edge of the ring, four or five rawhide strings crossed it, knotted together where they intersected, and serving as a handhold.

The drum was beaten with a short stick, which might be bare, or might have a little deerskin or buffalo-hide wrapped about the beating end.

THE RATTLE

The rattle, commonly used in the dance and in doctoring, was formed, in the usual way, of two hemispheres of rawhide sewed together with sinew, in the hollow of which a number of small stones were placed. The two pieces of which such rattles were made were almost circular, but running from one side of each of these discs was a strip of hide, perhaps an inch wide, and when the wet rawhide was sewed together, these pieces, from three to five inches long, were joined by two seams on either side of a straight stick which formed a handle. After the sewing was finished and the rawhide had dried, the rattle was often painted red, and perhaps, at a point of the rough sphere opposite the handle, and in the seam, were attached a few crow or magpie feathers, or sometimes the down-feathers of an eagle. Rattles were of different sizes, the sphere sometimes being from two-and-a-half to three inches in diameter, and sometimes much smaller. Rattles were sometimes made from the scrotum of a buffalo-bull.

The handles of rattles were sometimes wrapped with red cloth, or perhaps with finely tanned antelope-skin. Rattles used by the doctors to drive away evil spirits which were

afflicting people with disease were usually small. Some of these are very old, and legends or myths of various sorts are told of them.

WHISTLES

War whistles were made from the wing-bone—humerus, or ulna—of the eagle or of the sandhill crane. Both these birds were esteemed as powerful war helpers—the eagle from the fact that he captures his prey and lives on flesh, and the whooping crane because of his resonant voice, which was felt to be alarming. Moreover, the crane is a bird of great courage, and if wounded and unable to fly away, fights hard, and will even attack a man if he comes near it. It does not seem to fear anything. Courage like this was greatly desired by every warrior.

These war whistles were made by cutting off both ends of the bone, making a notch in the side near the mouthpiece, and then so stopping the hollow of the bone with pine gum as to deflect the air blown through the bone and cause a shrill whistling sound. Such whistles were usually hung about the neck by a deerskin string, and were blown when men went into battle. Sometimes the down-feather of an eagle was tied to the whistle. As elsewhere shown, they were used by persons who were suffering in the Medicine Lodge.

FLUTES

A flute, or flageolet, much used by young men, was made by whittling out, as perfectly as possible, a cylinder of juniper wood about



Left: Painted drum, Cheyenne; Center: Carved flute, Cheyenne; Right: Beaded whistle, Cheyenne

eighteen inches long, which was then split and each half dug out to make a shell. The two halves were then fitted and glued together, and held in place by a lashing of sinew or deerskin strings. The six fingerholes were made by burning with a hot iron. In recent times the ornamentation was usually beads of various colors, strung on a thread of sinew and wrapped close about the cylinder; but in earlier days dyed porcupine quills were wrapped about the instrument above and below the holes, and near the mouthpiece. A short distance below the mouthpiece was often carved the figure of some animal, very often a horse or a bear, standing out on a block from the surface of the cylinder. Sometimes the flute was carved at one end to imitate the head of a snake or a duck.

Flutes were of two kinds, one simply for making music, and the other—made for the owners by men who were believed to possess peculiar powers—had the property of charming the girl the man loved and making her love him. Both kinds were used in courting. They were played only at night. Not very many years ago it was common, on the Tongue River Indian Reservation, to hear the plaintive but pleasing notes of these flutes sounding from the neighboring hills.

Some men, no doubt, performed chiefly for their own satisfaction, and wandered about playing all night long. Early in the evening the faint notes of the instrument were heard a long distance from the camp, and the music might move along from point to point until the player had gone all about the camp's circle. Later in the night the sounds often drew nearer and were heard immediately outside the camp and moving around it; toward morning they might come from within the circle, and perhaps be in the middle of the camp. By daylight the music ceased.

Heard at night and from a distance, this music, strange and plaintive, was very charming, and had about it not a little romance. Sitting in the lodge at night, the occupants might listen to the distant sounds with very different feelings—the traveler merely with enjoyment of the sweet music; the older people with complete understanding of what it meant and with an amused tolerance; while the notes might quicken the pulse of some young girl busily engaged at her task and seeming to regard nothing else, until, when the sounds had closely approached, she put aside her work and, pushing open the hanging door, walked swiftly off a little way from the lodge to meet him whose playing she had recognized.

GAMES, AMUSEMENTS, AND HUMOR

LIKE people the world over, the Cheyennes had their sports. From their earliest years the children played about the camp, grubbing in the dirt, dabbling in the water at the edge of the stream, heaping up along the trails piles or ridges of dust, which represented breastworks or the walls of lodges; or, as they grew older, swimming in the streams, and making mud images in summer, while in winter they slid down hill, or played upon the ice. So it went through life, at least to middle age; and if the games of older people were more serious than those of the children, they still furnished the amusement which is as necessary to primitive as to civilized man.



Buffalo rib sled, Hidatsa

The amusements of these people, like their very lives, were simple. Without books and without any of the varied forms of public entertainment known to civilized life, their diversions were almost altogether social. Visiting, feasting, the dance, and competitions of skill in various games, constituted their forms of recreation. It resulted that they were great gossips,

visiting from lodge to lodge, carrying to each other items of news, on which they commented at great length. The frequent feasts furnished opportunity for the discussion of news, and for bringing forward suggestions bearing on the welfare of the tribe.

Some of us have known of country districts where formerly a funeral was regarded as an event which no one would miss on any account—a gathering which for weeks afterward furnished subjects for conversation to the countryside. So it was with the Cheyennes. The great ceremonies of the Medicine Lodge, or the renewing of the medicine arrows, while to many of the older people occasions of much solemnity—seasons of prayer and humiliation, and devout worship—furnished to the younger people also an opportunity for meeting friends and relatives from whom they had been long separated, and for indulging in a more or less protracted course of social excitement, from which for months or years they might have been or might be debarred. On such occasions young men had the opportunity to see young women who had grown up since they had last met; girls attended the social

dances so frequently held, and young people generally renewed earlier acquaintance—and met other young folks hitherto known but slightly, or not at all.

If this was true among the Cheyennes as a tribe, it was equally true when the whole great camp of the Cheyennes met that of some other tribe, perhaps as large, and mingled more or less freely with its members. Then, sometimes, a boy courted a girl of the other tribe who took his fancy; or a Cheyenne girl was sought in marriage by a young man of the strangers.

Among boys and young men there were many games and sports—contests of skill, usually in some athletic struggle. Each one was eager to outdo the others, whether in shooting at a mark, or throwing sticks, or wrestling, or at the kicking game. At this last sport the Cheyennes were skillful; and while most often it took place within the camp, it was sometimes practiced on a larger scale when the Cheyennes were camped near some other tribe, and the contest was between the boys of the two tribes.

These competitive games continued from childhood to middle life, and when men became too old



Children playing, unknown Cheyennes

to take part in them, they still enjoyed watching the games and seeing practiced by those coming after them the sports in which as young men they had participated. Besides the different diversions of the children, such as holding mimic camps of their own, and pretending to hunt buffalo, or to fight other groups of boys, who represented enemies, as already described, there were many games for children, or young folks, closely similar to those played by civilized children.

In winter the Cheyennes used to slide down hills on sleds made of buffalo-ribs placed side by side, with a stick tied across each end. This was done not merely by children, but by young men and boys and even by older active men, but not by women. For sliding down hill they chose a long slope, preferably ending on a frozen river. Girls and young women made toboggans from a slab split from a tree and used these, but not the rib sleds, for their coasting. The rib sleds went faster than a horse could run.

In winter, little boys and very small girls slid down snow-covered hills on pieces of rawhide; and even in summer very little boys might be seen sliding down steep banks in similar fashion. Their mothers encouraged them to do this, for it was a convenient and labor-saving method of wearing the hair off the buffalo-hide that they wished to use for the soles of moccasins. The removal of this hair is said to have been a slow process in ancient times, but later, after they devised bone scrapers for removing the hair, or had obtained metal ones, it was more easily accomplished.

Very small children were and are fond of playing in the dirt, in which respect they do not differ from children of other races. They often built up ridges of dust, making them like breastworks. They were straight, or circular, or took the form of squares, perhaps, with a gateway in one of the sides. Often today they build houses, stables, and corrals in imitation of those of their parents, laying out the groundplans with rows of stones, and sometimes having in the corrals mud images of horses, buffalo, and cattle. In the cutbanks along the streams I have found niches dug out in which children had stored figures whittled from clay—some like little cubes or rhombs, some shaped like bricks, while others had a bottle-like form. Some of the niches were packed full of such geometrical forms, and were evidently children's storehouses for their blocks. Little boys were much given to modeling figures of animals and men from clay, and some of these were remarkably good.

In summer children spent much time in the water, and boys and girls alike were expert swimmers.

The little boys spun tops (*nī tō' hō yīn* = "whirling," i.e., whipping tops) on the ice or on the hard, frozen ground, whipping them with a whip-lash of several strands, and trying to see who could keep his top spinning the longest, or could drive it farthest over the rough ground, before it fell over. On the contests they bet their tops. One of two boys whipped his top along the ground until it fell; the place was marked, and then another started, and if his top went beyond this place he won the other top.

The little boys had tops also which they spun with a string, much as white boys spin theirs. The tops were made of cotton-wood or ash, and were provided with a bone point or peg, or, in later times, when it could be had, a brass tack was used. These tops were spun on ice, or on hard ground, or even on a circle tramped hard in the snow. The strings used were twisted from the milkweed that grows along the streams. The boys wagered their tops as to which one should spin the longest.

Women and girls, as well as men and boys, had their sports and games, which tested their strength, skill, and agility. They were often swift runners, good swimmers, and excellent horse-women, and skillful at ball and at throwing sticks. They were industrious and faithful in performing their daily tasks, at which they chattered and gossiped, yet they found abundant time for active recreation, whether in throwing the long and slender willow sticks, in kicking the football, in playing the finger game, or in gambling at the seed game. Usually girls and women played by themselves, yet occasionally a lad of thirteen or fourteen might be seen with a group of girls older than himself, kicking the football.

Some of the young Cheyenne boys were practical jokers and, like many practical jokes, theirs were sometimes thoughtless and cruel. Little Hawk, born between 1840 and 1850, was a practical joker about whom many stories were told. Sometimes he hid by the trail along which the women passed in going for water; and when a woman passed, carrying a skin full of water, Little Hawk shot an arrow through it, and laughed delightedly at the sight of the water spouting in two straight streams from the holes where the arrow had gone in and come out. The water-skin was ruined beyond repair.

One night the people heard a loud shout saying, "The Mexicans have come to trade; they are camped

here just outside the circle." All the women jumped out of bed, got together the things that they had to trade, and rushed off in the direction of the voice. When they got outside the circle they could see no camp, and looked around, not knowing what to do. Then from behind them on the other side of the camp came the shout, "The Mexicans are camped here, and have plenty of things to trade." At once the women, thinking they had made a mistake, turned about and

ran in that direction; but when they reached the border of the camp on that side, no Mexicans were to be found. Then the cry sounded from still another direction, saying: "This is where the Mexicans are; come this way"; and some of the women started, but presently someone shouted out, "Oh, it must be Little Hawk who is calling us about from one place to another." It proved to be Little Hawk, and there were no Mexicans.



White Shield and boy



CHIEF WOLF ROBE
No. 101
BIRD

CHIEFS, COUNCILS, AND JUSTICE

THE government of the Plains Indians, while varying in some particulars among the different tribes, was democratic in form and in fact. The will of the people was the force that controlled, and the chiefs, however great their power and influence, seldom attempted to run counter to public opinion.

CHIEFS AND COUNCILS

Among the Cheyennes there was a governing body of chiefs, not all of equal authority, which decided a variety of questions coming before it, its decisions, if necessary, being enforced by power of the soldier bands. Yet this council of the chiefs, always endeavoring to act for the best interests of the tribe and striving to lead public opinion, seldom attempted to force it.

In the Cheyenne view, the first duty of a chief—though not always the one first spoken of—was that he should care for the widows and the orphans; and the second that he should be a peacemaker—should act as mediator between any in the camp who quarreled. The dignity of a chief did not permit him to take part in any quarrel; he might not take personal vengeance for an offense committed against himself; to do so would result in loss of influence.

Since so much depended on his example and precept, a chief must be brave in war, generous in disposition, liberal in temper, deliberate in making up his mind, and of good judgment. A good chief gave his whole heart and his whole mind to the work of helping his people, and strove for their welfare with an earnestness and a devotion rarely equaled by other rulers of men. Such thought for his fellows was not without its influence on the man himself; after a time the spirit of good will which animated him became reflected in his countenance, so that as he grew old such a chief often came to have a most benevolent and kindly expression. Yet, though simple, honest, generous, tender-hearted, and often merry and jolly, when occasion demanded he could be stern, severe, and inflexible of purpose. Such men, once known, com-

manded general respect and admiration. They were like the conventional notion of Indians in nothing save in the color of the skin. True friends, delightful companions, wise counselors, they were men whose attitude toward their fellows we all might emulate. We do not commonly attribute to Indians a spirit of altruism, but it was seen in some of these old-time chiefs.

Among the Cheyennes there were forty-four chiefs—four principal chiefs, and four from each of the ten bands of the people. The four chiefs of each band, who were in constant touch with their own constituents, knew and accurately reflected their opinions. Each group was thus equally represented in the council of the chiefs, and presumably by men of sufficient intelligence and influence effectively to present its views to the council. The four head chiefs—though usually men of special influence and importance possessed, in weighty matters, little more actual authority than other members of the council, yet from their position, and the qualities which had raised them to that position, their advice and opinions usually received greater consideration than those of other speakers.

Of strong influence in the government of the tribe was the sentiment of the soldier bands. These were the police and chief fighting force of the tribe, and at different times one or another band might possess special influence on account of its bravery, its success, and the self-confidence which followed this success. If for a series of years one of the soldier bands had been generally fortunate in war, had performed feats of daring which reflected special credit on it, and for this or any other reason had come to have an exalted opinion of its own importance, it might at times exercise pressure on the chiefs, and induce the council to act in some particular way that it desired. Or, the chiefs, recognizing the popularity and influence of the band, might defer to it, ask advice of its chiefs, or might even submit to it the decision of weighty questions. It was thus sometimes possible for the council of the chiefs and one of the soldier bands to overrule the wishes of the majority of the tribe. Yet this was not likely to occur, or, if it did happen, some change of sentiment soon took place, and the pendulum of public opinion swung back again.

At the meetings of the council of chiefs, questions of interest to the tribe were considered. Concerning minor matters, one of the principal chiefs was likely to express his opinion, and, if supported by another principal chief, the council assented without debate. Questions of greater importance, such as moving the camp when buffalo could not be found, of undertaking a tribal war, or of seeking an alliance with other tribes for the purpose of proceeding to war against a common enemy, were discussed at great length, the deliberations perhaps extending over several meetings. In such debates the talking was done chiefly by the older men—those of greatest experience—yet after the elders had stated their views, middle-aged men expressed theirs, and even younger men might speak a few words, suggesting a different point of view, or giving new reasons for or against a certain course.

Such councils were conducted with much form and with a degree of courtesy that could hardly be exceeded. Usually the subject of the council was known in advance and to some extent had been discussed. When all the chiefs were present, a few minutes of silence ensued, then one of the older men arose and introduced the subject at issue. His remarks were followed by a brief silence for consideration, when another old man followed him and the discussion continued. Sometimes there were wide differences of opinion among the men, yet each was listened to gravely and with respect, and no matter how earnest the debate might become, no man ever interrupted a speaker, nor did anything like wrangling occur.

While these discussions were commonly confined to the council of the chiefs, and only a few other old men were present in the lodge, the meetings were in



From left to right: Black Ree, Young Little Wolf, White Elk, Two Moon, Wooden Leg, Bobtail Horse, and Buffalo Calf

no sense secret; for in summer, when the weather was warm and the lodge-skins were raised, a considerable audience might gather and listen to what was said.

When a decision had been reached, it was announced to the camp by the crier, who, mounting his horse, heralded the news as he rode about the circle, from the opening on the east, toward the south, then to the west, then to the north, and so back to the east again. After the council was concluded, the different chiefs talked of its proceedings with the people generally, so that full publicity was given without delay to all acts of the governing body; whatever they did was thoroughly canvassed through the camp, and the public feeling about it at once known. If by any chance this public feeling was adverse, and personal argument by the individual chiefs and the soldiers who favored it failed to convert the people to their

views, the action taken was likely to be modified to meet the public opinion.

In practice, however, this did not happen. The popular pulse had been felt and the public sentiment well ascertained before the council met. The older men were always conservative and slow to take any action that was radical; it was seldom that a decision had to be reconsidered.

The war chiefs of the Cheyennes were the chiefs of the different soldier bands, and led these bands when any duties were to be performed. They were not especially leaders of war-parties, for any man who could enlist followers might lead a party to war.

The four principal chiefs of the tribe were equal in authority, and the others of the forty-four chiefs were really counselors, whose authority as chiefs extended no further than over their own immediate following. However, their positions as counselors commanded respect, and led the people to listen to the advice which they gave.

Chiefs were chosen to hold office for ten years, for it was thought that this period was long enough for anyone to serve. Yet, if, at the end of ten years, a chief had proved himself a good one, he might be chosen to serve a second term. The soldier chiefs—that is, the chiefs of the different soldier bands—were elected and changed at the same time.

Of the forty-four chiefs who had held office for ten years, four, or sometimes more, were usually elected for a second term, and of these, four were likely to become the head chiefs. While the soldier chiefs held office for ten years, as did the others, still, if one did anything wrong he might be removed from his office, and a new chief chosen for the remainder of the term. A soldier chief elected for a second term became the head man of all the soldier chiefs.

Any one of the four principal chiefs of the tribe might, at the end of the ten-year period, choose his own successor, and so might name his own son to follow him at the end of his ten years of office. If a son was chosen, he was likely to be a good man and the choice to be acceptable to the whole tribe. Thus in a sense the office of principal chief was hereditary. The son might decline to serve, as in the case of Bull Hump, son of Dull Knife, of the Northern Cheyennes. Bull Hump, though named by his father and the choice of the tribe, refused to take his father's place, on the ground that chiefs were then (1883) no longer needed. If a chief had no son whom he wished to succeed him, he might choose another man, who



in turn might select his son. If the son of a dead chief was a boy too young for the position, someone was elected to fill the father's place, but when he became a man the boy might be made a chief, if he had proved himself fit.

If, as often happened, a principal chief died or resigned and failed to nominate anyone to take his place, his successor might be chosen from among the forty-four head men, but was quite as likely to be selected from among the braves of the tribe who did not belong to this council.

The choice of a chief was an important matter, and there was much discussion as to the best man for the place. A large lodge was pitched, a feast was made, and all the chiefs were called together to consider the man for this position—one who was brave, whose heart was strong as well as big—a man generous and wise.

They endeavored to choose a man of even temper, liberal and brave; they never selected one who was quick-tempered or stingy. They used to say that a man of mild temper and generous disposition was wise. Regard was had for a man's judgment and discretion, and for the quality of his mind as respects justice.

Among those qualified for the position of chief, there was no strife as to who should secure it, no "wire-pulling" or intrigue. If a man who had been chosen as chief declined to accept the office, he might have to be persuaded to accept, or he might definitively decline. In not a few cases men have refused the office, often on the ground that the responsibility was too great. Roman Nose,¹ who was several times selected as chief, was an example.

Each chief of those who exercised the right to nominate his successor was careful to choose a good man—one who would be acceptable to the chiefs and to the people. When the time came for the assembling of the new chiefs, it was the duty of each outgoing chief to fetch his successor to the first meeting. For this service his successor presented the outgoing chief with a horse.

In old times, when the chiefs wished to take some action, a council was called to consider the matter, often without notifying the head chief. When the council had decided on a certain course, the head chief was sent for, and the decision announced to him. If two of the principal chiefs were in the camp, both were

sent for to attend the council. After these head chiefs had been told of the decision, and had considered it, they very likely approved the action of the council and directed that it be carried out; but if they thought the decision unwise, they said so, and gave their reasons for it, telling the council that they must not act as proposed. The council usually accepted this decision. In such a case the head chiefs thus possessed the veto power.

Sometimes, on the other hand, the head chief gave a feast, called the council together, and told them that he thought it would be well to do some particular thing—for example, to move away to a certain place—and asked the guests what they thought of this. If, after talking the matter over, they did not agree with him, he usually said no more about it. Having asked their advice, he felt that he must abide by their decision.

It is said that when the forty-four head men were first chosen, forty-four official sticks were made, to represent them. Each stick was about a foot long, as thick as the finger, and sharpened at one end. They were always carried about with the camp—by one of the chiefs, or, as is believed by others, in the bundle with the medicine arrows. When the chiefs were to be called together, one of the forty-four sticks was set in the ground before the seat of each chief, and messengers were sent to summon them. As each man came to the place of assembly and sat down, the stick before his seat was taken up and put back in the bundle, until, when all were present, the forty-four sticks had been returned.

When one or more chiefs were to be elected to take the place of men who had died or resigned, as many of the forty-four sticks as there were vacancies were taken into the lodge where the council was held, and for each vacancy to be filled a stick was thrust into the ground in front of the place where each new man was to sit, to be removed when he had been called and had taken the seat to which he had been elected.

Middle-aged warriors and old men attended such meetings, and in public speeches talked over the various men available, saying what they thought of each. The discussion and the expressions of opinion usually showed very clearly who was the most popular man for the place. There was no formal balloting, but when the sentiment had crystallized on the one man, two messengers were sent to bring him to take his place among the chiefs, and when he came he was asked to sit in the seat of the man who had died or resigned.

¹ Killed in 1868 at Beecher's Island. See *The Fighting Cheyennes*, p. 277.



White Buffalo

Sometimes, and especially often in later times, the man chosen might decline the office, and another man must be selected. Old men resigned from this council when they had passed the period of active usefulness. The intention of a man to abandon the office was usually known in advance and his successor chosen before he formally resigned.

It is said that long ago if the man chosen for the position refused to accept it, misfortune was likely to happen to him; he would not live long. It was held to be a man's duty to accept.

At the decennial election of chiefs, ten small sticks were prepared to mark the years that had elapsed since the last election, and after the choice had been made, these sticks were put aside—some say in the bundle with the arrows, some say with the sacred hat.

The two youngest of the forty-four chiefs acted as doorkeepers, and also as messengers for the chiefs, and sometimes they held over for a second term. When the chiefs had decided on any course of action, the doorkeepers were sent to summon the two principal men of one of the soldier societies—perhaps of the *Him' ōwē yūhk' is*, or of the Fox Soldiers. When these soldier chiefs came, the chiefs told them what had been decided on, and directed them to inform their soldiers, which they did at once. The orders of the chiefs were conveyed to the men of the camp in this way. A little later the old crier on his horse rode about the camp, calling out the orders, so that all the women and children might become informed.

There were certain old rules governing chiefs which have long passed out of use. One of these was that if a woman went to a chief's lodge to borrow fire, he was expected to give her a horse. If a chief, riding a fresh horse, met on the prairie a woman whose horse had become exhausted, the chief should dismount and give to the woman his horse to ride into camp.

Long ago it was unusual for anyone to go to the lodge of one of the principal chiefs to borrow anything. If an individual asked the chief to lend him something, the chief at once presented the article to the borrower, so it came about that people seldom tried to borrow anything from a chief.

A chief, after a man had shaken hands with him, was supposed not to become angry with that person under any circumstances. The man might quarrel with, or abuse, or even whip, the chief, and he would not resist. But this might happen only four times; the fifth time the chief was ill-treated he was free to resent the injury.



Wolf Robe

Nothing definite is known about the origin of the system of selecting chiefs, but some short tales are told about it. One of these attributes the system to the culture hero Sweet Medicine, and comes from Tangle Hair, an old man whose mind was well stored with legendary lore. In substance it is as follows:

The man who had brought the buffalo said, "Now you must make chiefs." He took four sticks and stuck them in the ground, one at the door, one at the back, and one on each side, so that there was a stick toward each of the four cardinal points. Between each pair of these first sticks, ten others were set in the ground, making in all forty-four. The people were called in, and from the four bands of soldiers forty-four chiefs were chosen. Then he said to the people, "Now, the smartest men among you must look about over the earth and examine the plants and herbs that grow, and you will find medicine with which to doctor the sick, and you can cure them. Now you have buffalo, and you must kill them to eat, and to make robes for your beds, and clothing. From their hides you can make everything that you need to wear. When you go out to hunt, you will find many other animals, deer, elk, and smaller creatures, and you can use their skins also to make clothing."

OFFENSES AGAINST TRIBE FELLOWS

Crime as understood by civilized people scarcely existed in the Cheyenne camp. Such a thing as theft was unknown. Sometimes it might occur that an individual rode, without permission, horses belonging to someone else. This was seldom done, but occasionally a man used the property of another, and so persistently as to cause a quarrel between himself and the owner. Such a quarrel once resulted in the death, at the hands of the owner, of the man who used the horses. On another occasion the owner of the horses, after fair warning, knocked the trespasser down with a club, and gave him a thorough beating, which ended the matter.

If a dispute serious enough to threaten real trouble took place between important men, the matter was talked about in the camp and, coming to the ears of the head men and chiefs, they discussed it, and perhaps called a council and summoned these men before it in order that their difficulty might be settled quietly. To such a council the men sent for always came. Each stated his case, and the council decided the question on its merits. Very likely they decreed

that one of the men should pay something to the other. The council's decisions were usually fair and just, and were accepted by the disputants, but occasionally some headstrong man might refuse to accept the decision, and the trouble continued until a quarrel arose, and perhaps one of the men was killed. If by accident a man killed anyone in the camp—man, woman, or child—the matter came before the council, which decided how much he should pay to satisfy the relatives of the dead.

Public opinion was the law of the camp, and few were bold enough and reckless enough to fly in the face of it. Conformity to the rules of conduct established by custom and enforced by the chiefs was insisted on, and infractions were punished with a severity measured by the injury done, or likely to be done, to the community by violating these laws. As is elsewhere said, offenders often were severely whipped by the soldiers, or their property might be destroyed, their lodge-poles broken, or their horses killed.

On the whole, however, infringement of the rights of others was unusual. Once in a generation, perhaps, a man killed another in a quarrel, or in a drunken row, or in self-defense. The causes of such occurrences were often alcohol² or fights about women. Sometimes one murder led to others.

The death of Walking Coyote in 1855 and the events connected with it show something of how quarrels, fights, and killings occasionally took place in the Cheyenne camp.

In the year 1854, White Horse, then chief of the Fox Soldiers, stole the wife of Walking Coyote, who was very fond of her and brooded much over the trouble. He sent word to White Horse to send back the woman, saying that if he did not do so he would kill him. No attention was paid to the message, and after a time Walking Coyote went to Yellow Wolf, who had adopted him, and said: "Father, as you know, White Horse has stolen my woman and I have sent

² Alcohol quickly became one of the chief articles of trade with the Indians. In 1833, the Rev. Moses Merrill reports that two men who had come into his missionary station near Bellevue, Nebraska, declared to him that half of the furs purchased in the Indian country were obtained in exchange for whiskey. "They also stated that the Shiennes [sic], a tribe of Indians on the Platte River, were wholly adverse to drinking whiskey, but five years ago; now—through the influence of a trader, Capt. Gant who by sweetening the whiskey induced them to drink the intoxicating draught—they are a tribe of drunkards."

word to him many times to send her back, but he does not do so. Now I intend to kill him, and I ask you not to interfere with my trouble, not to ask me to refrain from killing this man.”

Walking Coyote knew that Yellow Wolf loved him better than he did any of his own sons and daughters, and he suspected that Yellow Wolf might ask him not to take revenge on White Horse, and if Yellow Wolf asked this, Walking Coyote felt he must obey him.

One day in the summer of 1854 Walking Coyote with War Bonnet rode up to St. Vrain's Fort (on the South Fork of Platte River in Colorado) from their camp twenty miles below. White Horse was living in a camp of Cheyennes there. Walking Coyote rode into the fort and saw White Horse and his wife—not the woman who had been stolen—sitting on a bench in the hall of the fort. When the two saw Walking Coyote, they arose and walked toward the hands' messroom, and Walking Coyote jumped off his horse and shot White Horse with his gun, the ball passing through the upper part of the chest and killing him at once. Then Walking Coyote and War Bonnet led their horses outside the gate of the fort, and sat down there, and Walking Coyote said, “If anyone has anything to say to me, I am here.”

After they had sat there for a short time, Little Wolf, a cousin of Yellow Wolf, came out and said to Walking Coyote, “This is all over with; you should now go back to your camp.” The two men mounted and rode to camp.

Shortly after this the woman returned to Walking Coyote's lodge. After this killing, Winnebago (*Nāhk' to wūn*) renewed the arrows because of the killing.

While certain customs and rules prevailed, there was no form of law as we understand it. There was no such thing as a legal death penalty. If a man killed a tribe fellow, he was often obliged to flee, at least for a time, for he was likely to be killed by some near relative of the dead man. If he saved himself by flight, the council considered the case, and the chief called in the relatives of the dead man and from them learned how much it would take to satisfy them for their loss. The relatives of the slayer were then called together and the penalty stated to them. When they had paid over this fine to the dead man's relatives, the slayer might return to the camp.

Whether the matter was thus settled or not, the man who had done the killing was ostracized by his fellows, temporarily expelled from camp, and lost all standing in the tribe, which he never recovered. He

was obliged for a time to camp away from the main tribe, and often he went away from their camp and spent a year or more with some other tribe. A common refuge for Cheyennes was the Arapaho camp, where no guilt attached to them and they were regarded as being as good as anyone else. Lapse of time might cause partial forgetfulness of the event by the people at large, but this forgetfulness never extended to the relatives of the man who had been killed. Their anger flamed hot long after all others in the camp had measurably forgotten the deed and in a sense had condoned it. Nevertheless, the slayer of a tribesman, or indeed of anyone belonging in the camp, even though he might be a member of another tribe, remained all his life a marked man.

The slayer of his fellow might not eat in the same lodge with other people, nor from their dishes, nor might he drink out of their cups. He had a special dish, a cup of his own, and if by any chance he drank from a cup not his own, the cup was often thrown away; if not, it was purified as stated below. No one would smoke with him. He might not receive the pipe as it was passed from hand to hand, but carried his own pipe and tobacco. If unmarried, he probably never took a wife, for no woman would consent to live with him.

If anyone had unwittingly eaten or drunk from the dish or cup that an outlaw had used, and discovered it, he performed a ceremony to purify the utensil, rubbing his right hand on the ground and then over the dish, and repeating the motions with left and right hand again until the dish had been rubbed over four times. The same ceremony was performed in case a man smoked a pipe that an outlaw had used. The stem was held down to the ground, bowl up, the hands rubbed on the earth and then passed over the stem.

It was said that his pipe did not taste or smell as it should, that he was not a fit person to smoke with. The word *ok kliwūs*, meaning “one who has killed another,” carried the idea of decay, putrefaction, rotting.

If people were talking and the murderer came up to join in the conversation, someone might tell him to be silent, that he should not speak. It was supposed that such a man suffered an inward decay, and would ultimately die and blow away. He was supposed to smell bad, either from this decay or from the bad dreams and thoughts that he must suffer. It was believed by some that from time to time he would vomit portions of his own dead and decaying flesh. A

part of this old belief was that a man who had done this could never get close to the buffalo, because the buffalo would smell this dead or decaying flesh and would run away.

An outlaw appears actually to have lost his membership in the tribe, and the fact that he was not allowed to camp with it seems to have been a real expulsion. The man was "thrown away." True, after the gravity of the offense had been partly forgotten with the lapse of time, he might come back to the tribe, but could never recover his old standing. Not only was the man himself hopelessly disgraced, but his whole family lost caste. A young man or woman wishing to marry a daughter or a son of an outlaw was felt to have more or less disgraced his own family. It made no difference how prominent the man might have been nor how good his family, the commission of the act of bloodshed cast a stigma over his family and his relations shared in the disgrace. The matter was not only talked about and reprobated at the time, but often the blight remained on the children of the outlaw long after he was dead, and in any quarrel or dispute with other members of the tribe the disgrace was likely to be mentioned and thrown in the face of a child or relation, even when he or she was fifty or sixty years of age.

The killing of one man by another in a private quarrel was extremely rare, but there have been cases where men most eminent in the tribe did this and thereby at once lost all credit and influence. Instances of this are the cases of Porcupine Bear,—the Lame Shawnee—of Gentle Horse, and, last of all, of Old Little Wolf, the greatest of modern Cheyennes. Porcupine Bear, when he killed Little Creek, was chief of the Dog Soldiers; Gentle Horse was a brave of great influence; and Little Wolf, when he killed Starving Elk, was the fighting chief of the tribe. These men by their acts separated themselves from their offices, and became outcasts.

It was not solely the killing of a blood member of the Cheyenne tribe that was regarded as so heinous an offense; the same feeling existed if the man killed had been adopted into the tribe. There were many men in the camp, by birth Sioux, Arapaho, Ponca, or others, who had married Cheyenne women and had Cheyenne children, and who were regarded as Cheyennes. If one of these was killed, the murderer became an outlaw. Such cases were Nahktowun, the Arapaho who killed Walking Coyote, a Ponca; and Gentle Horse, who killed his brother-in-law, a Sioux.

The two men killed had married among the Cheyennes and been adopted into the tribe, hence their slayers became outlaws and were treated as such.

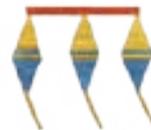
The fact that they were outlaws justified the chiefs of the Cheyennes in not allowing Porcupine Bear and his party to count the first coup in the fight with the Kiowas and Comanches in 1838. At the time they were regarded as not being members of the tribe, and the coup was no more to be allowed to them as Cheyennes, than it would have been allowed to the member of any foreign tribe as a Cheyenne.

Those who committed these acts were often men of great bravery, whose success in war and whose standing in the tribe had made them somewhat arrogant and impatient of those who did not do as they had ordered. Such cases were those of Gentle Horse and of Little Wolf. Other men committed murder in revenge. When the crime was committed by a common man in the heat of temper, he had abundant leisure for repentance, and was often in a constant state of nervousness and alarm, fearing that he might be killed by a relative of the man he had slain.

Small matters of dispute were settled privately, either by the parties themselves, or by their relatives. The council seldom occupied itself with private quarrels, unless they had a bearing on the general welfare. If, however, a man was worried about some small dispute, he might carry the matter to the chiefs, or to two or three of them, and ask their advice. He invited them to eat with him, stated his case, and asked their opinions as to what he should do.

It will be seen, therefore, that in the government of the tribe there was no tribal machinery for the punishment of crimes against individuals. The soldiers interfered to prevent or punish acts by individuals which were against the general welfare—which seemed to threaten the tribe as a whole; but a harmful act against a person was punished, if at all, by the injured individual or by members of his family.

The references to the killing of one tribesman by another must not lead to the inference that such occurrences happened often; indeed, they were most unusual with only five or six such cases in more than forty years.



TRIBAL DIVISIONS

WE know little about the early relations of the different groups that make up the Cheyennes of today. That the tribe is composed of Tsistsistas and the Suhtai, who were later absorbed by them, we are quite sure, but some old men have declared that originally there was a third tribe, *Hěts tsī o mīs' tāne*, pipestem men.

All the people of the whole Cheyenne camp usually met together at least once a year at certain important religious festivals. The great camp was arranged in a wide circle with the lodges three or four deep, the opening of the circle being to the east or southeast.

In those days there were ten groups or divisions of the tribes. Most old people who tell of these divisions or bands agree that they were ten in number, including the Suhtai, yet old men differ as to the position in the camp-circle occupied by these different groups, each of which had its own place in the circle, all its members camping together. These differences of memory seem to indicate that the group places in the circle were not firmly fixed and may have changed from time to time.

Standing within the circle, not in the center but toward its south border and forty or fifty yards

from the circle of lodges, were the two sacred lodges in which were kept the sacred medicines of the Cheyennes, the arrows, *Mabuts*, in the easternmost, and the sacred hat, or bonnet, Issiwun, in the westernmost. Except for these two, which were usually marked with double crosses—signifying grasshoppers or dragonflies—there were no other lodges within the circle, save when on special occasions—as for a dance, a council, or some other important event—a large lodge might be put up in the center of the circle.

It may be conjectured that the fashion of camping in a circle is comparatively modern and was not adopted until the permanent houses, which the Cheyennes once occupied, had measurably been abandoned and the people had become nomads, following the buffalo. The practice may have been borrowed from some other tribe, for it was practiced by many of the Plains people, for example, by the Arapahoes and Kiowas, who were early associates of the Cheyennes, but not by the Comanches, with whom also the Cheyennes were often in contact.

In old times, descent was matrilineal. A woman born into the group remained all her life a member of that group, and her children were members of it. When a man married a girl he went to live with her group, though always known by his own group name. His position in this group was what he himself made



Cheyenne camp

it. The famous Black Kettle, who was killed in the so-called battle of the Washita in 1868, was a Suhtai who married a girl of Wuhtapiu. He went to live with that group and became its chief. His children belonged to their mother's group, and not to his own. The reason now given for this rule is that there was always a possibility that a man might throw away his wife and take a new one, and that in such a case the wife and children must be cared for by the woman's group; that is to say, by her relations. When the woman's sons grew up and married, each went to live with his wife's group. Rarely, if the father was divorced from his wife and took a new one from another group, he might take with him to the group he was now to live with his eldest boy, if he was approaching manhood; but this boy was always spoken of as belonging to the group of his mother. A man might live in several groups during his life, a woman in but one.

Each tribal group or division had its own special taboos, ceremonies, and special medicines connected with the group ceremonies, but it is not now possible to learn much about these ancient practices, because the rigid observance of these customs passed out of use long ago. It is stated that when the tribe lived in the North they followed closely the customs that had been handed down to them, but with the migration, the breaking up into separated settlements, and the invasion of their old country by civilization, these old customs were neglected, forgotten, and lost. In fact, the ancient customs and beliefs as to relationships and groups have been so very greatly modified that it is now impossible to find among young people anyone who knows about these old matters. Such young people positively assert today that the tribal descent is in the male line, and it cannot be doubted that present-day investigation would lead people to that conclusion. The old men up to twenty or twenty-five years ago, however, were unanimous in saying that the children belonged to the mother's group.

MARRIAGE OUTSIDE THE DIVISION

Among the Cheyennes there exists the strongest feeling against marriage between relatives, no matter how distant, and by many old men the clans or groups are still considered as bodies of kindred—descendants of a common ancestor. Many old men have declared to me that the members of a clan consider all of the clan their relations and it is certain that usually marriages took place between men and women who belonged to

different groups.¹ In old times if a young man wished to marry some girl in his own clan the old people, when they learned of it, asked him what he meant and whether he wished to marry his relative.

One of the first things to be done in considering a marriage was to find out whether any relationship—no matter how distant—existed between the young man and the girl. If there was found to be any kinship whatever, the marriage was forbidden. Girls were closely watched as well as the young men who came to court them, and if one of these young men was related to the girl, both he and the girl were warned. Often young people did not know very much about these degrees of relationship and were likely to make mistakes. From hearing the talk of their mothers the girls were likely to be better informed than the boys. If a girl knew or learned of any relationship between herself and a suitor she always told him of it and warned him not to come again. If, through inadvertence or lack of knowledge of his relationship, a young man tried to court a girl who was related to him or even a member of the same division, the old women spoke to him and the young man, warned of the mistake, was much mortified.

It is said that the men of *Ō ivo' i ma nah'* were the first to marry within their own division, but that this did not begin until after the Sand Creek massacre. The cholera of 1849, which decimated some of the camps, may have had something to do with the breaking up of old customs.

Besides the names of divisions or clans there are or were many other families, camps, and groups—people who remained together for a time and at length came to receive an association name or nickname which might later be used as well to designate their descendants. Indians are notably quick to observe a peculiarity, and at once to seize on some salient characteristic of an individual, an animal, or a group of living creatures, and from this characteristic to apply some expressive name. When the people were migratory, as in the old days, their camp groups were ever shifting and new names were constantly being applied to the groups that were forming.

¹ In the effort to learn something definite about exogamy among the Cheyenne groups, I made—about 1902—detailed inquiry concerning more than fifty marriages of old people, with the result that in all cases, except where the Suhtai were concerned, the man and the woman had belonged to different groups.



Red Armed Panther

WAR AND ITS WAYS

THE Cheyennes have a tradition of a golden age when war was unknown and universal peace prevailed. All strangers met in friendship and parted on good terms. Such a far-off time, when hostile encounters were unknown, is told of by many of the tribes of the northern plains.

No doubt there were fightings and wars long before the coming of the white man, but these were probably the results of more or less temporary quarrels, and were not bloody. The only incentive likely to have caused such fightings was the desire for revenge, and this desire, unless promptly gratified, was apt soon to be forgotten. The introduction of the horse, however, furnished to all the Plains tribes a new and strong motive for war, for by war men might acquire something of very great value. Until the coming of the horse, the only possessions of the Plains tribes, except food and clothing, were their dogs, and their arms and implements of stone and wood. When the horse came its usefulness was at once recognized, for here was an animal whose possession added immensely to the comfort and freedom of the people. On its back they could carry loads which hitherto they had borne themselves; it carried them and their families where they pleased, and revealed to them a means of discovering and venturing into new countries of which they had known nothing; it permitted the pursuit and capture of food and its transportation for long distances to the camp. Since everyone desired to possess horses, all men would exchange desirable things for them; thus no one could have too many horses.

Only two ways of procuring horses in any numbers were known—by capturing those running wild on the prairie and those which were in possession of neighboring tribes. When we read of wars by the Indians, we think chiefly of surprises and battles, and the killing and scalping of enemies; but while such imaginings would fit many war journeys, there were many brave and successful warriors of the Cheyennes who never went on warpaths of this description, who on their war journeys tried to avoid coming in close contact with enemies, and had no wish to kill en-

emies. Such men went to war for the sole purpose of increasing their possessions by capturing horses. Some of these—men who possessed high reputation for courage, success, and general well-doing—made it their boast that they had never killed a man, and perhaps had never counted a coup. Such men specialized in capturing horses: their interest in war lay in that alone.

An example is Big Foot, who, when with two companions he came upon a mounted Ute Indian and the Ute was shot from his horse, paid no attention to the wounded man—toward whom his two companions were racing, each wishing to have the glory of the first coup but rode off as fast as he could to capture the enemy's horse. On another occasion a war-party, of whom Big Foot was one, charged a body of the enemy, who fled. Big Foot was riding a very fast horse and noticed that one of the enemy was riding a particularly fine horse. Instead of taking part in the fight, he followed this man, and, when he overtook him, did not try to kill him, but threw his rope over him, dragged him from his horse, and, letting the man go, caught the horse and went off with it.¹

Men famous for success in this particular field of war were Old Yellow Wolf, who lived in the first half of the nineteenth century, and was killed at Sand Creek; Big Foot, who died about 1901; and Elk River, who died about 1908. All these men lived to great age; all were successful in war, and all had great reputations as being most skillful in dealing with enemies and in securing horses.

EARLY WARFARE

The old people say that it was long after they had begun to journey westward that they had their first battle, and that the Hohe (Assiniboines and Crees, or possibly Ojibwas) were those with whom they fought. This early fighting took place long before they saw the first white man, and before they had reached their plains home.

¹ *Indians of Today* (Chicago, 1900), p. 10.

Of this first battle it is said that during their journey westward, the people went out to kill buffalo, and that while engaged at this the Assiniboines came up and tried to surround the same herd.² The encounter caused a dispute, and soon afterward, in the night, the Assiniboines attacked the Cheyenne camp. The Assiniboines already possessed guns, while the Cheyennes had never seen any, and did not know what they were. The noise and effect of these strange weapons frightened the Cheyennes, and they ran away. The Assiniboines killed some of them, and cut off their hair; that is, scalped them.

The Hohe often attacked the Cheyenne camp at night. They carried horns made of the hollow stems of some plant, by blowing through which they made a sound like the call uttered by the buffalo in spring, and made this sound as they approached the camp, so that, if the Cheyennes heard them, they might suppose buffalo were coming, and should not suspect the approach of enemies. One day a camp of Cheyennes heard this sound, and while some thought it was made by buffalo, others feared that enemies were coming, and said, "Those are Hohe coming; we had better get away!" Some ran and hid themselves, but others said, "No, those are only buffalo!" and did not go.

The Hohe came and killed those who remained. Those who had run away went to another camp farther down the river. When the fugitives came to the stream, their dogs ran to the bank to drink, but stopped and turned away without lapping. The water looked red. The Cheyennes drank, however, and afterward learned that they had drunk the blood of their own people.

The fighting between the two tribes lasted for many years, and the Cheyennes say that it was the Hohe who drove them away from homes they had established, and forced them south. Lewis and Clark mention the story of their flight southwestwardly, but attribute it to the Sioux.³ They tell many stories of attacks made on them by the Assiniboines before they reached the Missouri River, where, according to tradition, they obtained their first guns through the cunning of an old woman, who led the enemy into a trap.⁴

Afterward, when the Hohe again attacked the village, the Cheyennes with their guns defeated and drove them off.

THE POSITION OF WAR

The Cheyenne men were all warriors. War was regarded as the noblest of pursuits, the only one for a man to follow; and from earliest youth boys were encouraged to excel in it. They were taught that no pleasure equaled the joy of battle; that success in war brought in its train the respect and admiration of men, women, and children in the tribe, and that the most worthy thing that any man could do was to be brave. It was pointed out that death in battle was not an evil, and that such a death, besides being glorious, protected one from all the miseries which threaten later life and are inevitable to old age.

This training, and the public opinion which supported it, guided the Cheyenne youth and gave them their motive for that hardihood and readiness which were essential to success in war.

Among a people whose chief occupation was war, a large part of the oral literature naturally consists of stories of battles and the achievements of heroes. I have elsewhere set down some of this tribal history, and others of these tales are found in this book.

Their bravery led the Cheyennes to take risks in war not commonly faced by Indians, with the result that they lost many men in proportion to their numbers, and at the same time made their name a terror to their enemies. If injured by people of another tribe, they were eager for revenge. If people belonging to the village had been killed in some recent fight, the women in the camp went about and begged the young men to go to war, to take vengeance on their enemies. They passed their hands over the men, imploring them to take pity on them, while through the village old men shouted advice to all men to go to war, and kill some of the enemy, that the lamentations of the mourners might cease. The killing of enemies brought comfort and consolation to those whose relations had been killed by those of that tribe—it wiped away their tears. In the same way, a man who had lost a relation in war might carry the pipe about through the village and offer it to warriors, asking them to help him; meaning that they should assist him to revenge himself on his enemies. If they accepted the pipe and smoked, they promised to do what he asked. War-parties often set out from this motive alone.

² *The Fighting Cheyennes*, p. 5.

³ Lewis and Clark, vol. VI, p. 100.

⁴ *The Fighting Cheyennes*, p. 7.



Sioux and Cheyenne warriors fighting Custer's men in the Battle of the Little Bighorn; by Red Horse (Sioux)

On some occasions, when the injury was great, the whole tribe broke camp and moved toward the enemy, seeking vengeance. When such a general move took place, the medicine arrows and the sacred hat were carried with them and into battle as war medicine. Such a tribal war journey was made in 1838, preparatory to the fight between the Cheyennes and Arapahoes, and Kiowas and Comanches; and again in 1853⁵ against the Pawnees.

VARIOUS BELIEFS

Dreams and other portents had much influence on people who were going on the warpath, and an unfavorable dream might cause one man or a whole party to abandon the journey and return to the village. In old times—especially in the earlier half of the nineteenth century—a method of divination was practiced in which the badger—an animal that possesses mysterious power—was employed. When men went afoot on the warpath, a badger was sometimes killed, the belly ripped open, all the entrails removed, but all the blood saved, and the animal left lying on its back on a bed of white sage on the ground with head toward the east till next morning, the blood remaining in the visceral cavity.

Next morning, the men who wished to do so unbraided the hair and, naked, walked by the badger, one after another, and each looked down at his reflec-

tion in the smooth surface of the blood. If in this mirror a man saw himself aged, wrinkled, and with white hair, he knew that he should live to be old; if he were soon to die the reflection would have its eyes closed. If the looker was to die of disease, he saw himself much emaciated. If he was to be killed and scalped, the reflection appeared without scalp, and with bleeding head. It was like a looking-glass. No man told another what he had seen. Usually the men who saw themselves scalped seemed downcast, turned back from their warpath and returned to the village. The others went on. Not every member of the war-party looked into the blood; it was not obligatory.

Old Whirlwind, a famous warrior, told what he saw on an occasion when he looked into the badger's blood. He recognized his own face, but it was changed, wrinkled and withered, and his hair was gray. Thus he knew that he would not be killed in war, but would live to old age.

The associations of the warpath seem to have fostered intimacies and to have made this a propitious time for young men to ask favors of one another. Of these favors, some had to do with love and marriage.

In old times, when they went on the warpath, if a man wanted a girl for his wife, he might cut from a tree a slab of wood, draw on it the figure of a girl, and also whatever he wished to give for the girl, such as horses, bridles, a war-bonnet, and other articles. Having completed the picture, he sent it by another young man to the war-lodge in which the girl's brother or cousin slept. The messenger handed it to the brother, and after he had looked at it, he was likely

⁵ *The Fighting Cheyennes*, p. 80.

to send for any of his brothers who might be with the party. To them he showed the slab of wood, and told them who had sent the offer for this sister. If all agreed to the marriage, another picture of the girl was drawn on the slab, with figures of whatever they were willing to offer in return for his presents, and the piece of wood was returned to the suitor. After the party had returned to the main village, he sent to the girl's lodge the things represented in his drawings, and the young people of the other war-lodge sent what they had drawn, with the girl, to his lodge.

Another custom among the Cheyennes that was very strong was this: If a young man killed in battle had sisters or female cousins, and a friend took special care of his body, one of these sisters or cousins was likely to be given the friend for a wife, to show the family's appreciation of what he had done. The family of one so killed were grateful to a man who cared for his body, took his own blanket to wrap about it and carried the body to a proper place for leaving it. It was difficult or impossible formally to bury one who had been killed at a distance from home, and the most that could be done would be to put the body in a suitable place. If the wolves devoured the dead man, that was not regarded as a misfortune. If a young man died from sickness and some young friend made a special ceremony of mourning for him, he also was likely to have a wife given him in acknowledgment of this. Marriages of this sort often took place.

WOMEN AND WAR

While it was not common for women to go on the warpath with men, yet they did so sometimes, and often showed quite as much courage and were quite as efficient as the men whom they accompanied. I have already mentioned the achievement of the sister of Chief Comes In Sight, who during Crook's battle on the Rosebud, June 17, 1876, charged down against the white troops and brought off her brother, whose horse had been killed, and who, except for his sister's courage, would very likely have died on the field.⁶ This woman became the wife of Black Coyote, a man belonging to a very distinguished fighting family among the Northern Cheyennes, who was captured by the soldiers, in 1878, and committed suicide in prison.

⁶ *The Fighting Cheyennes*, p. 324.

One of the last war women in the tribe died in August, 1915. She took a prominent part in an important battle between the Cheyennes and the Shoshonis in 1868, at which time she counted coup on one Shoshone and killed another. This woman's name was *Ehyophsta*, commonly translated Yellow-head Woman, or Yellow Haired Woman. She was the daughter of Stands In The Timber, who died in 1849, at the time of the big cholera, and a niece—as we would say—of the old Bald Faced Bull. Her husband, Walking Bear, was killed in 1867 by the accidental discharge of his own gun.

Women who had been to war with their husbands formed, it is said by some, a guild or society and held meetings at which no one else might be present, but, of course, the number of these women was very small.

AMULETS AND CHARMS

Amulets and charms of many descriptions are carried and worn. Men very commonly wear stone arrowheads tied in the hair or about the neck, and usually to the shank of the arrowpoint is tied a little deerskin bundle containing some medicine, usually a part of some plant. They wear these stone arrowpoints in order that they may have long life. This is a part of the general belief as to the endurance, permanence, and perhaps even immortality of stone. When the culture hero, Motsiuiiv, went into the lodge of the *maiyn*, and was given the medicine arrows, he saw there four men, two of who afterward proved to be stone, and two, plants. The chief spirit in the lodge told him that he might choose one of these four men whom he desired to resemble. The culture hero chose the wrong man—a mere plant—and was told that if he had chosen either of the stones he would have lived forever.

When going to war men wore certain charms or amulets, which protected them from harm, or warned them of impending danger, or endowed them with qualities of the person or thing represented by the charm. Gentle Horse, who was born in the year 1800, and died at the age of ninety-five, possessed a protector—a lock of hair cut from the head of the son of his father's brother. When his uncle, who had made this charm, gave it to Gentle Horse, he told him that if he would always keep this lock, it would warn Gentle Horse when danger was near. The charm might be carried by one not the owner, if the owner had instructed him in its use. On one occasion Gentle



Unknown Cheyenne

Horse lent this medicine to Stiff Finger, and told him its secrets, just as he was starting off to war. Flocco and Brave Wolf were of the party.

One day while they were going on, Stiff Finger heard something whistle close to his ear, and felt something brush against his head. From what he had been told by Gentle Horse, he knew that danger was near, and told his companions that he intended to turn back. Stiff Finger was a brave man, with an established reputation, and his advice carried great weight. Nevertheless, there was a difference of opinion in the company. Finally, Stiff Finger and some of his companions turned back. Others, who laughed at

the warning and went forward, were attacked next day by Utes, and two were killed and two wounded.

When the famous warrior Roman Nose⁷ was killed, in the Beecher Island fight in 1868, he was wearing a war-bonnet made for him many years ago by White Bull, one of whose earlier names was Ice. Several imaginary descriptions of this war-bonnet have been given by writers who have described this battle, but the story of how it came to be made, of two of the taboos connected with it, and of its vari-

⁷ *The Fighting Cheyennes*, pp. 276-277.

ous protective influences, was given me by the maker, White Bull.

On one occasion during a storm, when it was raining and thundering, White Bull looked up into the sky and had a vision of a person there on horseback wearing a war-bonnet such as this, and by the side of this person was a hawk carrying in its feet a gun and a saber. The Thunder instructed White Bull to make a war-bonnet like the one he had seen, but it was not until long after this vision that he did so.

Once, however, while it was thundering, Roman Nose spoke to White Bull and asked him, "Do you ever see anything [i.e., that will protect from lightning]?" White Bull replied, "Yes, once I saw something." Roman Nose continued: "I once saw something too. Make that for me"; meaning, make that which you saw to protect one from the thunder.

When making this war-bonnet, White Bull first prepared a paint. He pounded to a powder many different colored stones, certain metals, black and yellow, yellow earth, some of the grass and other plants that sometimes come down from above, apparently frozen in hailstones, as well as the powdered stone bones of great animals. This powder was mixed with clay. Before dressing,—i.e., painting,—black paint must be used, made of charcoal from a tree which had been set on fire by lightning, and yellow earth must be put on the body in spots, like hail. In the front of the war-bonnet, close to the brow-band, and over the warrior's forehead, stood a single buffalo-horn. Immediately behind this horn, on top of the bonnet, was the skin of a kingfisher, tied to the hair. At the right side of the head was tied a hawk-skin. This hawk represented the person who in White Bull's vision had held in its claws the gun and the saber. From the headpiece, on either side, two tails of eagle feathers ran down toward the ground, the feathers on the right side being red, and those on the left side white. At the back of the head, part way down on the war-bonnet, was the skin of a barnswallow, while to the right side of the war-bonnet, where the feathers were red, was tied a bat, so that the warrior might safely fight in the night, for a bat flies at night and cannot be caught. In a battle an enemy may shoot at the person who is wearing this charm, but the one at whom he shoots is not really there in the flesh, as he appears to be: the real person is up above—the bat. The swallow often flies close to the ground, working back and forth. The enemy may be shooting at the person on horseback, but what he is shooting at is not actually the person: the

real person is the swallow, down below, flying close to the ground. The kingfisher which is tied to the head behind the horn was worn for the purpose of closing up holes which might be made in the body by bullets, because when the kingfisher dives into water, the water at once closes over it.

When the bonnet had been prepared, and was to be given to Roman Nose, White Bull warned him, saying: "After I have finished this and you put it on your head, you must never shake hands with anyone. If you do so, you will certainly be killed. If you get into any fight, try to imitate the call of the bird you wear on your head—the kingfisher." Besides this, one of the laws of this war-bonnet was like a law of the Contraries—that the wearer might not eat food that had been taken from a dish with a metal implement.

The man who wore this war-bonnet must have his horse dressed—i.e., painted—in a particular way. First a large scalp was tied to the horse's jaw, and zig-zag lines, representing lightning, were drawn down the front of the horse's legs. To paint a white horse, blue earth was used for these lines; for a black horse or a bay, white earth was used. A cream-colored horse, with white mane and tail, would have no lightning marks on his fore legs, but on both shoulders and both hips rainbows must be painted, four rainbows in all.

Roman Nose had entire faith in this war-bonnet, and it was believed that it had always protected him in battle. He had worn it in many fights, especially in the year 1865, when on several occasions he rode back and forth within twenty-five or thirty yards of lines of white troops, all of whom shot at him without effect. As elsewhere told,⁸ it is believed that he was killed because he unwittingly violated one of the laws of the war-bonnet.

Soldier Wolf possessed a war-charm, made for him at the time he first went to war, when he was only about thirteen years of age. In the old times he wore it in battle, tied on his breast. He so wore it in the Custer fight. He was never wounded. This charm is a naked human figure of deerskin, three or four inches long, with the long hair of the buffalo hanging down from its head. When worn in battle, the charm became the real Soldier Wolf, and the wearer, Soldier Wolf, could not be wounded unless the charm was hit. In the Custer fight, Soldier Wolf rode at a

⁸ *The Fighting Cheyennes*, p. 276.

man who tried to shoot him, but the gun failed to discharge, and Soldier Wolf rode over and knocked down the man. Turning his horse, Soldier Wolf came back again. The man had now regained his feet, and again tried to shoot, but once more his gun snapped and Soldier Wolf shot him in the chest.

Sections of baculites are worn as charms. Sometimes a small section may be tied in the hair, but usually they are worn on a string of deerskin or of buffalo-hide, tied about the neck. When worn by men on the warpath, such charms will often indicate to a man where enemies are to be found, and when men are fleeing and being pursued, the stones if prayed to and shaken in the air will bring a heavy storm so that the tracks of those who are running away will be effaced.

White Bull had one of these sections wrapped with beads and adorned with weasel-tails, which he used to wear as a necklet. When he abandoned scouting and fighting, he addressed the stone, telling it that he had now given up fighting and killing

people, and from this time forward the stone would be obliged to live as best it could, and that he was going to war no more. Then he put it away in his house.

Armlets, in pairs, made of the hoof and skin of the shank of a white-tail deer, were sometimes worn in the dance or in medicine-making, or in war, tied about the naked arm. They conveyed to the wearer some of the great power of the deer, making him swift to run, and light and active in all his movements.

A protective charm to be tied to the scalp-lock, close to the head, consists of a brass ring to which is tied a bundle of medicine. Two twisted deerskin strings hang from the ring, and on the end of each are two white beads. The two strings represent each an arrowhead, and the ring, the muzzle of a gun. When going into battle the bundle of medicine is untied; a spear of grass is plucked, the end wet in the mouth and touched to the medicine in the bundle. The man then spits ceremonially on his hands and makes the ceremonial motions,⁹ and sticks the spear of grass in his head. The effect of this is to protect him from the arrows and the bullets, making him as slender and as hard to hit as the spear of grass is.

A necklet, owned by Crazy Head, has protective power. A long string of twisted buffalo-hair supports a flat, oval stone, perhaps an inch-and-a-quarter by an inch-and-a-half, bearing a general resemblance to the human face. The two holes drilled in it allow the passage of buffalo-hair strings. These holes perhaps represent eyes, and above each is a curved line, the eyebrows. Somewhat below the eyes a representation of teeth is scratched in the stone. Behind the stone is tied a little bundle of medicine, consisting in part of the heart of a swift hawk. To two strings hanging from the bundle are tied the feathers of the hawk.

This bundle has protected Crazy Head in battle. Several times when wearing it he has just been scratched by bullets. Once he was shot in the body, the ball grazing the edge of the stone and chipping a little flake from it. The ball penetrated the flesh not more than an inch. In the fight with the Crows on the Big Horn River, where he received his name, he was wounded—scratched—in the palm of the hand, in the leg, in the body, and was knocked off his horse, and coup was counted on him—by people who beat him about the head—five times. From all these wounds he was laid up only about one day.



Stone war club, Plains style

⁹ See footnote 3, p. 156.

A WAR EXPEDITION

THE motives which led the Cheyennes to go to war were thus a desire for glory, a wish to add to their possessions, or eagerness for revenge, but the chief motive was the love of fighting, which was instilled into them from early youth. From their earliest days boys were taught to long for the approbation of their elders, and this approbation was most readily to be earned by success in war. The applause of their public was the highest reward they knew.

The Cheyennes were always active, and even in severe winter weather the men were usually out and about, hunting, chasing buffalo, or even going on the warpath. Late winter or early spring was, in fact, considered a very favorable time for going to war on foot; that is, to take horses. The reason is obvious. At that season, after the long, hard winter, the ponies were thin, and little able to carry riders for great distances. The small raiding party, with its long start and many remounts, had every advantage over the pursuers, whose horses were likely to become exhausted before the enemy could be overtaken.

Parties returning from such expeditions often reached home at the time the swelling cottonwood buds were about to burst. It was the practice to use these brown, gum-covered buds to paint records of their deeds on their robes, making pictures that did not wear off for a long time. Hence the saying, "I have painted my robe seven times in the spring," came to mean, "I have gone on foot to war [so many times]." Another fashion of robe-painting will be noted later.

In old times—say up to about the year 1850—war-parties usually went on foot.¹ Such excursions

¹ Such men lived until a few years ago and were extremely tough and enduring; and an example of this came out in a story told of an incident that happened to She Bear when a young man. She Bear possessed a sense of humor which made him quite ready to laugh at a joke even if it were against himself. He said that when he was a young man he heard of a dance that was to be held in two or three days at a neighboring camp, distant from his home about seventy-five miles, and set out to walk to that camp to attend the dance.

He had gone about half the distance, and was walking along singing to himself and practicing his dancing steps as he walked. Presently someone behind him said: "You are dancing well; the girls will look at you"; and turning about he saw close to him Spotted Wolf, who also was on his way

were made for the purpose of taking horses. It was not until somewhat later that trips for the purpose of attacking and killing enemies became usual. On the other hand, when some grave injury had been inflicted on the tribe, the general movement to revenge this injury was made on horseback.

THE LEADER AND THE PARTY

On the foot parties, the men who carried the war-pipe—the leaders—were usually middle-aged men. Young men very seldom led a war-party. They were satisfied to gain experience by following their elders, until they had reached a point where they thought themselves competent to carry the pipe.

When this time arrived, and a man determined that for the first time he would lead a party—carry the pipe to war—he called into his lodge some older man of great experience, and offered him the pipe and asked him for help. When the elder had accepted the pipe, the younger man explained that he wished to lead a party to war, and asked advice as to what he should do to insure success. Very often he was recommended to make an offering to the medicine arrows. The most acceptable gifts that could be offered to the arrows were the tail-feathers of eagles, but blankets, cloth, and calico were more often offered. After the young man had smoked with his adviser, he put on his buffalo-robe with the hair side out, took his gift for the arrows and a filled pipe, and left the lodge. Wailing and mourning so that everyone in the village might hear him, he walked toward the arrow lodge, carrying his pipe, and his offerings held with the pipe. He walked very slowly, and when he had reached the door of the arrow lodge, stood there and wailed. If the arrow-keeper was absent, in some other lodge in the village, he was told that a person was going to the arrow lodge, and went there to receive the visitor. The man who was carrying the pipe and the offerings entered the lodge and placed the pipe on the ground in front of the arrow-keeper, and then stepped back around the fire to the other side, for, of course, no one might pass between the arrows hanging at the head of the arrow-keeper's bed and the fire.

to the dance and had been watching She Bear from a place of concealment. She Bear told this as a joke on himself; but the interesting part of the story seemed to me that a young man should start off to walk seventy-five miles in order to attend a social dance.



Cheyenne riders

The young man presented the offerings to the arrow-keeper, who took them in his left hand, placed the palm of his right hand on the ground, and passed the right hand down over the offerings. This he repeated. Then he transferred the offerings to his right hand and rubbed his left hand on the ground and passed it over the offerings, and repeated this. He then handed the gifts back to the young man and directed him to tie them to the arrow bundle. While doing this the young man prayed to the arrows aloud, for the arrows hear everything that is said to them. He told the arrows that he intended to go out with a party to get scalps and horses; begged that none of his young men should be hurt or killed; that he himself might count a first coup, and that his men might return home happy, with blackened faces. The arrow-keeper then lighted the pipe, and they smoked together, and if there were others in the lodge they also smoked with them. Any man who was going with this party might make an offering such as the leader had made, or might make other sacrifices.

Men were sometimes advised to go out on the hills and remain there all day, swinging to the pole by a rope tied to skewers which pierced the skin of the breast on either side. Others might go away from the camp and lie on a bed of sage for one or four days, without drinking or eating. These sacrifices were made to bring good fortune. Similar sacrifices might be made to insure good fortune in any other matter.

They were by no means peculiar to war, but were often made by partisans under certain special circumstances.

A man who had already led parties to war and contemplated another trip made less formal preparations. He called into his lodge his friends and some older men to discuss the matter. After they had eaten, a pipe was filled and the intending leader spoke, saying: "My friends, I wish to go to war. I wish to make up a party to follow me, and I have called you here to ask if any of you will join me." If he was a successful man—one who had been fortunate in leading war-parties—a number of young men always smoked, thus signifying that they wished to accompany him. Those who did not care to join let the pipe pass without smoking.

Mooney² explains what he calls "giving the pipe" as a ceremonial manner of enlisting recruits for a large war-party. The practice was common among the Cheyennes and other Plains tribes, but Mr. Mooney's definition is not broad enough. The offering of the pipe was not confined to war matters; it was the ceremonial method of requesting *any* favor of importance. The acceptance and smoking of the offered pipe was a favorable answer to the request. Thus, if a man wished to ask some of his tribesmen to accompany him to

² James Mooney, *Calendar History of the Kiowa Indians*, p. 282.



White Hawk

war, he might possibly take the pipe to them. If the chiefs of one tribe wished the assistance of another tribe in war, they sent the pipe to that tribe.³ If a young man wished to make an offering to the medicine arrows, he first offered a pipe to the arrow-keeper. If he wished an older man to paint him for the suffering of the medicine lodge, or to consent to make a shield for him, or to doctor his sick wife, or, indeed, wished any rather unusual and important favor, he went to the man to be appealed to with a filled pipe, offered it to him, and said, "Accept this pipe; I ask you to help me." Usually the old man knew pretty well what favor was desired by him who offered the pipe. The old man was free to smoke, or not, as he pleased, but it was unusual for a man to refuse, though sometimes he accepted with reluctance.

³ *The Fighting Cheyennes*, p. 174.

SPIRITUAL PREPARATIONS

When a number had agreed to go, a pipe was filled but not lighted and they went to the lodge of some priest or doctor, and after entering, the leader said to the medicine man, "We wish to go to war," and offered him the filled pipe. The man took the pipe—thereby agreeing to perform the necessary ceremonies—it was lighted and he smoked, and then sang a medicine war-song. Then he was likely to say to them, "It is well, my friends; you are to go to such and such a place, on such a stream; there you will find people—your enemies"—mentioning the tribe.

Before starting, the party sometimes went into a sweat-lodge with this priest, who prayed over and consecrated some special war implement that someone was to carry. This might be a war-bonnet, a shield, or a lance, and prayers were offered asking that the one carrying this implement might be fortunate and that neither arrow nor bullet might hurt him. The good influence of these prayers extended over the entire party. During this ceremony the young men cut bits of skin from their arms and legs, and left them as sacrifices in the sweat-lodge, or, perhaps, put the bits of skin or flesh under the buffalo-skull which rested on a heap of earth just before the sweat-lodge. This sacrifice was to gain the help of the spiritual powers. It has not been practiced for many years, but was common in the middle of the last century, and no doubt was offered more or less frequently up to the end of the old wars.

Certain matters might interfere with the starting out of a war-party. If it had been announced that anyone had made a pledge to renew the arrows, no war-party might start out until the ceremony had been completed. Sometimes, if people were in great haste to start out, the ceremony was greatly shortened and the arrows were merely wiped off. If the arrows had just been renewed, new feathers were not put on when another person promised to renew them. It often happened that while war-parties were out some member of the tribe would pledge himself to renew the arrows, not knowing that they had recently been renewed. In such a case the arrows were merely wiped off.

If someone had pledged himself to renew the arrows, just after a war-party had set out—if it had been gone only a few days—the chiefs would send out a runner to recall the war-party. If anyone had been killed by his own people, or anyone had committed suicide, then the war-parties that were out were in



White Hawk as an old man

great danger, for some of their number were certain to be killed, or perhaps the whole party might be destroyed by the enemy.

After the arrows had been renewed, however, war-parties were likely to start out in every direction, for the renewing of the arrows gave war-parties great power to succeed in their raids.

Before the war-party started, they supplied themselves with a little food, put their arms in order,

and provided themselves with extra moccasins. Sometimes, during the night before leaving camp, they marched about the circle, stopping in front of certain lodges and singing wolf songs. Sometimes women went with them—generally relatives of the young men. From some of the lodges before which they sang, little presents were often handed out—moccasins, tobacco, arrows, small packages of powder, a few balls, or some caps.



Counting coup, drawing by unknown Cheyenne

THE EXPEDITION

On the appointed day, the leader, alone, or with one or two companions, left the camp on foot; and afterward, at different times through the day, others set out, all meeting before night and camping together. Each man carried his personal belongings—arms, food, clothing, robe, and a rope. It was common for men to take with them dogs to carry a portion of their load, especially their extra moccasins. The pack was lashed on the dog's back as a pack is lashed on a horse. The food carried was usually dried meat, in sheets or pounded fine. This was to be used only in case of need, for they expected to subsist on the flesh of animals which they killed on the way.

The leader of the party bore the pipe, and went in advance. The others followed in single file, no one going ahead unless so ordered. When camp was made at night, the pipe was formally filled, lighted, and offered to the sky, the earth, and the four cardinal points. The leader talked to his young men, giving them good advice, and telling them how they should act. They ate, smoked, and perhaps sang, and made a prayer. Perhaps they did not pray. At this time they seldom made a sacrifice. After all had lain down and were probably asleep, the leader sang to himself a spiritual song—a prayer for help and for wisdom. At this time also he very likely made certain vows, about which he said nothing until the time came for going into battle.

The leader might not ask for, or help himself to, food or water—they must be offered to him; he must be invited to eat or to drink. Yet, even as long ago as the earlier half of the last century there were Cheyennes who did not conform to this old custom. Old Yellow Wolf (killed at Sand Creek in 1864) did not believe in this practice, and refused to follow it. He served himself.

On a war journey the young men and boys did all the work. They carried the leader's load, mended his moccasins, and served him with food and water. It was always understood that the harder physical labor was to be performed by the young men. On the other hand, if a little boy had stolen off and joined the war-party, they were likely to be very tender of him and not to allow him to do any work. This practice is made clear in the stories of their first war journeys told by aged men.

In the enemy's country, or when the weather was bad, that is, rainy or snowy, or cold, a war-party usually built war-lodges. These were conical shelters formed of poles, covered with boughs, grass, or bark, which kept out the weather and hid the light of the fire that burned within. When the enemy's country had been reached—or a territory where enemies might be looked for—the leader sent young men ahead, usually in pairs, to act as scouts and to look over the country. These scouts traveled cautiously, in ravines

and low places, where they might escape observation. Climbing to the tops of the highest hills they scanned the country minutely, to see if people were about, if smokes could be detected, or if the wild animals of the prairie showed signs of alarm. If buffalo were running, if antelope were seen to be watching from the top of a hill, if wolves were noticed sneaking off and looking back, the scouts waited with the utmost patience to learn the explanation of these actions.

On the other hand, if all the animals of the prairie were feeding quietly and no signs of people were observed, the scouts came down from their post of observation, and signaled the party that was watching them far behind to come on; while the scouts themselves, with the same caution they had used before, advanced to some other point of observation. If no mischance occurred and a camp of the enemy was found, the party went as close to it as seemed safe, and waited. When the circumstances were favorable, at night, when they supposed all the enemy were sleeping, they crept down into the camp and took what horses they could. At the point where they had waited, they left all they had been carrying—their extra moccasins, robes, any food that they might have, and perhaps some of their arms, but not their ropes. To this place all were to return when they had collected what horses they could, and from it they would start on their return journey.

When approaching the camp, they usually separated and entered it in pairs. It was the work of the older men—those who had much experience on the warpath—to go about through the camp, cut loose the more valuable horses which were tied in front of the lodges, and lead them out. While this was being done, the younger men and boys gathered up the loose animals feeding on the prairie nearby and drove them to the meeting place. Of the men who went into the camp to secure the war-horses and buffalo horses tied before the lodges, the most persistent, daring, or acquisitive would sometimes return several times in order to take as many as possible of these desirable horses.

The horses taken by each man belonged to him; and at the meeting place, and when they started on their flight, these captured horses were, so far as possible, kept apart until day came, when each could look over those he had taken and thus recognize the animals that were his. It is difficult for white men to understand how an Indian by simply looking over the little herd of from five to forty horses could so

fix in his mind the appearance of each that he would certainly know them later. Yet this is just what the Indians did, and it was unusual for any difference of opinion to arise among members of a war-party about any horse.

The men who first reached the meeting place might be obliged to wait some little time for the others, but usually a leader kept them there until all were assembled, when they started off at a good pace, driving the horses in separate groups. As soon as day came and each man could look over his horses, all were thrown together in one herd, and they were driven hard, most of the men following them, but one or riding on either side in order to direct the herd. As they had plenty of remounts, they kept the horses going at a high rate of speed, for they were eager to put as many miles as possible between themselves and the camp they had raided. Very often they drove the horses constantly for twenty-four hours or more. Toward the end of the first afternoon, the leader was likely to leave behind him two young men on fast horses to watch the back trail in order to learn whether or not enemies were pursuing.

During this fast drive, many of the horses that were old, slow, and weak, and so unable to keep up, dropped out of herd and were abandoned.

When the people of the plundered camp discovered that their horses had been taken, a force of pursuers often set out to overtake the raiders. Sometimes they succeeded in doing this; more often they failed. Those who were driving the horses had so many fresh animals to choose from that they had a distinct advantage over those following them, each of whom had only a single horse to ride in the pursuit.

If the raiders were successful and reached their village with many horses, sometimes they gave them all away. Usually the young men gave away some of them. A young man who was courting a girl might drive all his horses up to her father's lodge, and leave them there. On the return to the camp, no religious offering was made, nor any special present to the priest, though any man might make an offering to him.

When starting out on foot for the purpose of capturing horses, men often carried with them pieces of buffalo-robe, and when they had come near an enemy's camp and seemed to have a good prospect of taking horses, they made of these buffalo-hides saddle-pads, with stirrups, and used these on the horses they had taken instead of riding bareback. The robes were cut into pieces, which when sewed up formed long, nar-

row bags, in which an opening was left through which the bag might be stuffed with dried grass.

When a party started to war on horseback, each carried on his horse his moccasins, a sack of pemmican or dried meat, his arms, and his rope. In winter he had a blanket coat and a robe, and in summer a single blanket or a summer robe. Usually a man rode a common horse and led a running horse—his war-pony—which he would mount when going into battle.

When they had come near the place which the medicine man had indicated, the leader sent out one, two, or three scouts to go to this place and learn if the people were there that he had been told they would find. Usually the people were found, they tell us, just as the medicine man had indicated. After one set of scouts returned, they were relieved by others, who at once went out. Scouts who discovered enemies or signs of enemies came running back, and when they had come near to their party they began to howl like wolves. If, however, the enemy were so near that they might hear the howling and suspect something, the scouts did not howl, but stood with their sides to the party, holding their heads down, and barked like dogs. Then they hurried on to join their fellows. If the enemy were moving, the scouts, by riding in circles, signaled the party that they should come on.

Among a number of Plains tribes a scout or spy was called a wolf, and when he had discovered enemies he howled as he returned, to let his people know that the “wolves” were coming back with news. The meaning is, “We wolves are returning to tell something,” and this was perfectly well understood by everyone who heard it.

When the scouts were seen returning, their party built up a little mound, perhaps of earth or of buffalo-chips, and the members of the party sat down a little behind it in a half-circle. The scouts came on, ran four or five times about the mound, and then sat down near it, in front of and facing the war-party. The pipe was filled and offered to them, with a caution that the report they were to make must be true. They smoked, and reported, the formal smoking being a pledge that what they were about to tell was the truth. After the scouts had reported, all the party sat in a circle and sang a song which had been specially taught them by the priest before they left the camp. But if the enemy were close at hand, the ceremony accompanying the report was omitted.

A common piece of simple strategy practiced by

the Cheyennes, as by other Plains Indians, was to send forward a small party on swift horses to charge a camp or a party, in the hope that those attacked would set out in pursuit of the few enemies seen, who, retreating, might lead them into an ambush. Sometimes this plan was successful, and one or two important defeats of white troops—notably that at Fort Phil Kearny in 1866—have resulted from it. Often, however, the people hidden in ambush could not restrain their eagerness, but rushed out and showed themselves too soon, so that the stratagem failed.

THE RETURN

If a party returning from war had been successful, had taken horses, killed an enemy, or counted a coup, and had lost no men, they stopped at a little distance from the village to prepare for their entry.

It was at this place that they often painted their robes—“painting the war robes,” they call it. The edges of the buffalo-ropes were trimmed off evenly, strips of wolf-hide about two inches wide were prepared, and some man who had before had his robe thus ornamented was called on to sew a border of wolf-skin all about the robes. Someone went out and killed a buffalo, and taking off a large piece of its hide, tied up the end of one of the large intestines, filled this with fresh blood, and carried hide and intestine to the camp. A number of forked sticks were thrust in the ground in a circle about three feet in diameter, and by holes cut in its border the piece of green hide was hung over the prongs of the sticks, flesh side up, to make a sort of kettle or vessel, into which they poured the blood. Rye grass was now collected and tied in bunches, which were lighted and burned, and the ashes allowed to fall into the blood. This was stirred continually, and the ashes mixed with it by the hands. When a sufficient quantity of ashes had fallen in the blood, it became dark in color, and they tested it, and if when it dried it was quite dark, it was ready for use—a black paint.

The robes to be painted were now spread on the ground; a short stick was used as a ruler, and either with the fingers dipped in the blood, or with a sharpened, flattened stick, straight lines were drawn on the robes' flesh surface from one side of the robe to the other, and between these parallel lines were painted the tracks of wolf, or fox, or rabbit, or bear. Since the Cheyennes wore the robe with the head on the left side of the body, the tail on the right, the lines drawn



Cheyenne riders

across the skin ran vertically when the robe was worn. The robes were not all painted alike; there were various designs.

This paint did not come off; it clung to the dressed skin like glue. Anyone might have his robe painted, if he could persuade someone to do it for him. In the spring the buds of the cottonwood, instead of the ashes, were sometimes used to mix with the blood to make it black. They call these buds, and the tree as well, *mohk wi hio mohk tut tuts*,⁴ which means “robe painters.” The instructor did the work of painting, and the young men looked on and listened to the old man’s instructions.

When the successful war-party that had killed an enemy drew near to the home camp, and after they had painted their robes—though often they did not paint them—two scouts were sent out to learn exactly where the main camp was. The leader told these scouts just where the war-party would camp, so that on their return the young men might readily find it. When the scouts returned—usually in half a day, or at longest in a day—and reported the situation of the camp, all the young men uttered the war-cry. Now they took willow branches and burned them, and painted their faces with the powdered charcoal, each

according to his own fancy. Some used vertical stripes, but most men blackened the whole face. Meantime some members of the party made drums.

When all was ready, they set out for the camp. If they approached it at night, they waited until daylight before giving any sign of their presence. No one in the camp knew that the war-party was coming in; they took it by surprise. They tried to get close to the camp—near enough so that they could hear the dogs barking. Here they dressed themselves in the attire which they had worn in the fight.

At daylight the leader, who carried the pipe, mounted his horse and first set out, closely followed by the young men who carried the scalps on the poles. The others had loaded their guns, and stayed a little behind. The leaders went forward slowly until close to the camp, and then rode fast, shooting off their guns to awaken the sleeping people. Those who had been left behind on the hill, as soon as they heard the guns, formed in line and began to beat their drums and yell. If the people were camped in a circle, the leaders rode into it and around it. If they were camped along the stream, they rode along the border of the camp.

Sometimes advance notice of the return was given. After the party had stopped at a short distance from the village, the men dressed themselves in the attire they had worn in the fight. A party of men—from eight to fifteen, if the war-party was a large

⁴ Petter, *English-Cheyenne Dictionary* (Kettle Falls, Washington), pp. 193, 924, and 1067.

one—was sent forward to announce the return, so that all might know what had happened. These messengers approached the village as closely as possible without being seen, and then charged through the camp, shooting off their guns and waving the poles on which were the scalps that had been taken. The people were excited, and welcomed them with shouts and yells. All was joy. The women sang songs of victory, and prepared to welcome the main party, which came on not far behind, riding side by side in two lines. In the front rank were those who had shown the greatest courage, who had counted coups, or had performed any specially creditable acts. A man who had performed a deed of noteworthy bravery might be sent to ride ahead of the first line, which might number two, or three, or even ten or fifteen warriors. In the second line were the others of the party.

The whole camp came out a short way from the village and welcomed them. As they rode into the camp, the women and the people standing about to watch them called out: "Here they come! We have heard that they were coming and now they are here!" Some threw their arms about the successful warriors. Old men and old women sang songs in which their names were mentioned. The relatives of those who rode in the front rank—their fathers, and mothers, and aunts—testified to their joy by making gifts to friends or to poor people. The whole crowd might go to where some brave man lived, or to where his father lived, and there dance in his honor. The members of the party went directly to their own lodges, and turned out their horses. Their women blackened their faces, and sometimes the little children, and even near relatives, did the same. Then they were likely to prepare to dance all night, and perhaps to keep up this dancing for two days and two nights.

When a war-party which had lost men came within sight of the village on its return, they signaled by waving robes or blankets the number of their men that had been killed. In later times they conveyed this information by signaling with mirrors. If a member of a victorious war-party was killed, his companions sometimes left him on the ground on the battlefield, or perhaps carried him off to a distance and left him unburied. Sometimes a young man asked that this might be done, but even if nothing was said about it, he was likely to be placed on his robe on the prairie and left there. Sometimes the dead warrior was wrapped in his robe and put on a platform in a tree, this being regarded as the same thing as leaving him

on the prairie, since his body would soon fall down and his frame be torn to pieces by animals. The Cheyenne warrior wished to be killed, if at all, on the broad level prairie, where everyone could see him. When he died he did not wish to be covered by earth, but preferred to lie out on the prairie where the birds and the animals might devour his body, and his remains might be scattered far and wide.

VARIOUS CUSTOMS

There were a great number of customs and definite ceremonies connected with the warpath. When starting out, all the members of the party abstained from food and drink during daylight of the first day, but after the sun had gone down, food was cooked, meat roasted, and set before the leaders, and all ate. The leaders of a war-party might not eat any part of a buffalo's head, not even the tongue; nor any part of the hump, nor the sirloin—the best parts—nor any portion of the back. This taboo is believed to bear some relation to the sacred hat, called Issiwun. If the leaders ate any of these parts of the buffalo before anything was accomplished on the warpath, they would have no luck. After they had killed an enemy, however, they might eat the hitherto forbidden parts.

On the warpath they sometimes boiled meat in a hide kettle, supported on forked sticks, usually eight. The meat was put in cold water, and a man armed with two forked sticks took from the fire the hot stones and put them in the water. As they grew cold he removed the stones, while others kept up a supply of hot stones. When the water was boiling, the forked sticks trembled. The bottom of the kettle did not rest on the ground, but was unsupported. The buffalo's paunch was also used for boiling meat on the warpath.

During the first meal, just after the party had started out, if no dipper carrier was with the party—and often there was none—a young man went down to the stream and brought water in a skin, a bowl, or other vessel, and offered it to the leaders, beginning at the right of the line, until all had drunk.

To procure water easily, a dipper called *bistāb'bēvik'ūts* ("heart bladder," i.e., pericardium) was used. This consisted of a straight pole, six feet long, forked at one end, nicely trimmed and seasoned. A bull's pericardium was softened, and was kept open by a hoop, which was tied with four strings close against the forks of the stick; the butt of the pole was

sharpened, and when the implement was not in use was thrust in the ground. A young man without leggings or blanket would take this, run to the stream, dip up a bladder full of water, and run back to the war-lodge and offer water to the leaders. After they had drunk, others of the party might drink, the water-carrier making perhaps several trips to the stream, until all were satisfied. He might go to several war-lodges with water, if there were so many in the party. A dipper might not be made or carried by everyone. He who had it must have been instructed in its making and use by someone who himself had been taught to make one. To carry one of these dippers was likely to bring a young man good fortune in war. The man who carried it was called *sībīvik' otūmsh*, "owner of the pericardium." When the party had returned from the warpath to the camp, if they had killed any enemies, the owner of the dipper, at the dance which they held in celebration of the event, would sometimes go to the river, fill his dipper, and, returning, would pass it around to the members of the war-party.

He who carried the dipper must be the first one to get up in the morning, to go and get water for his fellows. If, while traveling, they crossed a stream, he was likely to reach down with his dipper, get water, and ride up to offer it to the leaders.

There were several kinds of vikuts. One of these had crow-feathers tied to the ends of the prongs, which in this case formed the handle. In this type the cup was tied, not to the prongs of the stick, but to the butt end. From the fork, lying in a groove (called "wolf road") cut for it, a bowstring ran down into the cup,

and was tied to it at the bottom. Four strings hung down from the thick butt of the staff and supported a hoop to which the pericardium was fastened. On the staff, about halfway down its length, was carved the figure of a wolf. Near the cup was carved a round sun, and still nearer the cup a crescent moon.

The purpose of the bowstring was to carry out a practical joke. If in the war-party there was a young man whose sweetheart was reported to have run away from him in the village, the man who was offering the water might, when this young man was drinking, pull on the bowstring. The effect of this was to throw the bottom of the cup up, and to dash the water into the drinker's face.

If, on this warpath they did not kill anyone, they left the dipper behind them; but if they killed, they blackened the staff, took it home and used it, as stated, and after the dancing was over, hung it up in some tree, and left it.

In large war-parties different groups of men cooked on different fires. A man belonging to one fire might pass by another fire and see cooking there a piece of meat which attracted him. He might take this piece of meat from the fire and carry it to his own. Then the men who belonged to the fire from which the meat had been taken might choose their best wrestler and go over to the other fire and challenge the best wrestler who belonged to it. The winner in the contest would take the meat which was in dispute. This was not done seriously, but as a joke, the meat being taken for the purpose of bringing about the contest.



Counting coup, drawing by unknown Cheyenne



SCALPING AND COUNTING COUP

THE quality most highly esteemed among the Indians of the plains was courage, and the warrior who displayed the greatest courage was he who brought back most glory from the warpath. It has been said that in former times the most notable achievement of an Indian was the taking of a scalp; and again, that to kill an enemy, to scalp an enemy, or to be the first to strike an enemy alive or dead, were three brave deeds, which impliedly were equally creditable. My experience does not confirm this implication.

Among the Plains tribes, to kill an enemy was good in so far as it reduced the numbers of the hostile party, but otherwise the act was regarded as relatively unimportant. Likewise to scalp an enemy was not a notable feat and in no sense especially creditable. If scalped, the skin of the head was taken merely as a trophy, something to show, something to dance over—a good thing, but of no great importance; but to touch the enemy with something held in the hand, with the bare hand, or with any part of the body, was a proof of bravery—a feat which entitled the man or the boy who did it to the greatest credit.

COUNTING COUP

When an enemy was killed, each of those nearest to him tried to be the first to reach him and touch him, usually by striking the body with something held in the hand—a gun, bow, whip, or stick. Those who followed raced up and struck the body as many as might desire to do so. Anyone who wished might scalp the dead. In many instances no one could be certain who killed a particular enemy, while some boy might be told to take off a scalp. The chief applause was won by the man who could first touch the fallen enemy. In Indian estimation the bravest act that could be performed was to count coup on—to touch or strike—a living, unhurt man and to leave him alive, and this was frequently done. Cases are often told of where, when the lines of two opposing tribes faced each other in battle, some brave man rode out in front of his people, charged upon the enemy, ran through their line, struck one of them, and then, turning and riding back, joined his own party. If, however, the man was knocked from his horse, or his horse was killed, all of his party made a headlong charge to rescue and bring him off.

When hunting, it was not unusual for boys or young men, if they killed an animal, especially if it was a dangerous one, to rush up and count coup on it. Where young men chasing a black bear on the prairie killed it with their arrows, they raced up to it on foot to see who should count the first coup.

It was regarded as an evidence of bravery for a man to go into battle carrying no weapon that would do harm at a distance. It was more creditable to carry a lance than a bow and arrows; more creditable to carry a hatchet or a war-club than a lance; and the bravest thing of all was to go into a fight with nothing more than a whip, or a long twig—sometimes called a coup-stick.

It was not unusual for a man, if he had been long sick and was without hope of recovery, or if some great misfortune had happened to him and he no longer wished to live, to declare his purpose to give his body to the enemy. In practice this meant committing suicide by attacking enemies without suitable means of offense or defense, doing some very brave thing, and being killed in the act.

There is still living in Montana a man who, when seventeen or eighteen years of age, after a long illness from which there seemed to be no hope of recovery, declared to his father that he wished to give his body to the enemy. The father assented, fitted out the son with his strongest “medicine,” and sent the boy off with a party to the south, armed only with a little hatchet. After the party had reached the country of the enemy, two of these, who were Utes, were discovered returning from the hunt. Both had guns. The Cheyennes charged on them, and the boy, Sun’s Road, having been provided with his father’s best war-horse, led. He overtook one of the enemy, who turned and tried to shoot at him, but the gun snapped. Sun’s Road knocked the man off his horse with his little hatchet, and riding on overtook the other man, who turned and shot at him; but Sun’s Road dropped down on his horse, avoided the bullet, and knocked the Ute off his horse. Both enemies were killed by the Cheyennes who were following Sun’s Road. The young man had now fulfilled his vow. He received from the members of the war-party, and from the tribe when he returned to the village, the greatest praise. He recovered his health.

The Cheyennes counted coup on an enemy three times; that is to say, three men might touch the body and receive credit, according to the order in which this was done. Subsequent coups received no credit.

The Arapahoes touched four times. In battle the members of a tribe touched the enemy without reference to what had been done by those of another allied tribe in the same fight. Thus in a fight where Cheyennes and Arapahoes were engaged, the same man might be touched seven times. In a fight on the Rio Grande del Norte, where Cheyennes, Arapahoes, Comanches, Kiowas, and Apaches defeated the Utes, the counting of the coups by the different tribes resulted in great confusion.

When a Cheyenne touched an enemy, the man who touched him cried "*Ah haih!*" and said, "I am the first." The second to touch the body cried, "I am the second," and so the third.

It is evident that in the confusion of a large fight, such as often took place, many mistakes might occur, and certain men might believe themselves entitled to honors which others thought were theirs. After the fight was over, the victorious party got together in a circle and built a fire of buffalo-chips. On the ground near the fire were placed a pipe and a gun. The different men interested approached this fire, and, first touching the pipe, called out their deeds, saying, "I am the first," "second," or "third," as the case might be. Some man might dispute another and say, "No, I struck him first," and so the point would be argued and the difference settled at the time.

Often these disputes were hot. I recall one among the Pawnees about which there was great feeling. A Sioux had been killed and Baptiste Bahele, half-breed Skidi and sub-chief, and a young man of no special importance were racing for the fallen enemy to secure the honor of first touching him. Baptiste had the faster horse and reached the body first, but, just as he was leaning over to touch it, the animal shied and turned off, so that what he held in his hand did not actually touch the body, while the boy who was following him rode straight over the fallen man and struck him. Baptiste argued plausibly enough that he had reached the body first and was entitled to be credited with the coup, but acknowledged that he did not actually touch the body, though he would have done so had his horse not shied. There was no difference of opinion among the Indians, who unanimously gave the honor to the boy.

Once two young Cheyennes were racing to touch a fallen enemy. Their horses were running side by side, though one was slightly ahead of the other. The man in advance was armed with a saber, the other, almost even with him, was leaning forward to touch the

enemy with his lance. A saber being shorter than a lance, the leading man was likely to get only the second coup, but he reached down, grasped his comrade's lance, and gave it a little push, and it touched the enemy as they passed over him. Although the owner of the lance still held it, yet because his hand was behind his fellow's on its shaft, he received credit only for the second coup.

A man who believed he had accomplished something made a strong fight for his rights, and was certain to be supported in his contention by all his friends, and especially by all his relatives. When disputes took place, there were formal ways of getting at the truth. Among the Cheyennes a strong affirmation, or oath, was to rub the hand over the pipe as the statement was made, or to point to the medicine arrows and say, "Arrows, you hear me; I did (or did not do) this thing." The Blackfeet usually passed the hand over the pipestem, thus asseverating that the story was as straight as the hole through the stem.

With the Cheyennes, if there was a dispute as to who had touched an enemy, counting the first coup, a still more formal oath might be exacted. A buffaloeskull, painted with a black streak running from between the horns to the nose, red about the eye sockets, on the right cheek a black, round spot, the sun, and on the left cheek a red half-moon, had its eye sockets and its nose stuffed full of green grass. This represented the medicine lodge. Against this were rested a gun and four arrows, representing the medicine arrows. The men to be sworn were to place their hands on these and make their statements. Small sticks, about a foot long, to the number of the enemies that had been killed in the fight which they were to discuss, were prepared and placed on the ground alongside the arrows and the gun.

In a mixed fight where many people were engaged there were always disputes, and this oath was often—even usually—exacted. A large crowd of people, both men and women, assembled to witness the ceremony. The chiefs directed the crier to call up the men who claimed honors, in the order in which they declared that they had struck an enemy; first, the man who claimed the first coup, then he who claimed the second coup, and so on. The man making the oath walked up to the sacred objects and stood over them, and stretching up his hands to the sky said, *Mā ī yūn āsts' nī āh' tū*, "Spiritual powers, listen to me." Then, bending down, he placed his hands on the objects, and said, *Nā nit' shū*, "I touched him." After he had

made his oath, he added, "If I tell a lie, I hope that I may be shot far off."

He narrated in detail how he charged on the enemy and how he struck him. Then were called the men who counted the second and the third coup on the same enemy, and each told his story at length. Next the man who touched the second enemy was called, and he was followed by those who had counted the second and the third coup on the same individual. In the same way all claimants told their stories.

If, under such circumstances, a man made a false statement, it was considered certain that before long he or some one of his family would die. The Cheyennes feared this oath, and, if a man was doubtful whether he had done what he claimed, he was very likely not to appear when his name was called. On the other hand, each of two men might honestly enough declare—owing to error—that he first touched an enemy. Or, a man might swear falsely. In the year 1862, a man disputing with another declared that he had first touched the enemy. The next year, while the Cheyennes were making the medicine lodge on the Republican River, this man died, and everyone believed, and said, that he had lied about the coup of the year before.

When two men were striving to touch an enemy and others were watching them, and the contest was close, the spectators might say to one of the two, "We did not see plainly what you did, but of what he did we are certain." In this way they might bar from the first honor the man concerning whose achievement they were doubtful.

If enemies were running away and being pursued, and one fell behind or was separated from his party, and was touched three times, if he escaped serious injury and later succeeded in joining his own people, the coup might again be counted on him up to the usual three times.

As an example of the odd things that have happened in connection with the practice of touching the enemy, according to Cheyenne rules, the curious case of Yellow Shirt may be mentioned. In the great battle that took place on Wolf Creek in 1838, between the allied Kiowas, Comanches, and Apaches, on one hand, and the Cheyennes and Arapahoes on the other, coup was counted on Yellow Shirt,¹ a Kiowa, nine times. When the charge was made on the

Kiowa camp, Yellow Shirt was fighting on foot and was touched three times, but not seriously injured. Later, he reached his village, mounted a horse, came out to fight, and was touched three times on horseback. Almost immediately afterward his horse was killed and his leg broken, and he sat on the ground, still fighting by shooting arrows, and was again touched three times and killed. So in all nine coups were counted on this man, all of which were allowed. In another case coup was counted nine times on a Pawnee, who was not killed and finally got away.

Among the Cheyennes the capture of a horse or horses was a brave deed, and if the man who had touched an enemy took from him a shield or a gun, the capture of this implement was always mentioned. The drum would be sounded for touching the enemy, sounded again for the capture of the shield, again for the capture of the gun, and—if the man had scalped the dead—for the taking of the scalp.

I believe that the high esteem in which the act of touching the enemy is held is a survival of the old feeling that prevailed before the Indians had missiles and when, if they fought, they were obliged to do so hand-to-hand with clubs and sharpened sticks. Under such conditions only those who actually came to grips, so to speak, with the enemy could inflict injury and gain glory. After arrows came into use it may still have been thought a braver and finer thing to meet the enemy hand-to-hand than to kill him with an arrow at a distance.

SCALPING

The general opinion that the act of scalping reflects credit on the warrior has no foundation. The belief perhaps arose from the fact that, when an enemy was killed or wounded,² brave Indians rushed toward him. White observers have very likely inferred that those who were rushing upon an enemy were eager to take his scalp. As a matter of fact they cared little or nothing for the scalp, but very much for the credit of touching the fallen man. Most people are untrustworthy observers, drawing inferences from their preconceived notions rather than from what actually takes place.

¹ So called by the Cheyennes from the color of his war shirt. His Kiowa name means Sleeping Bear.

² A Cheyenne man who had been scalped, and still lived, lost nothing of honor or prestige. He was not—as with the Pawnees—regarded as dead; he came back and was looked on as just as good a man as ever.

As already said, among the Plains tribes a scalp was not highly valued. It was regarded as an emblem of victory and was a good thing to carry back to the village to rejoice and dance over; but any part of an enemy's body might serve for this. Scalps were used to trim and fringe war clothing (shirts and leggings) and to tie to the horse's bridle in going to war. Usually the scalps taken were only a little larger than a silver dollar, but like any other piece of fresh skin they stretched greatly. Occasionally the whole skin of the head was taken.

When, on the warpath, a scalp had been taken by a young Cheyenne who had never before scalped an enemy, it was necessary that he be taught how to treat the scalp, how to prepare it for transportation to the village. Instruction in this ceremony was given by some older man familiar with such things, who in times past had himself been taught by a man older than he how the scalp should be handled. Before any work was done, the pipe was filled, lighted, and held toward the sky and to the ground; then the stem was held toward the scalp and a prayer asking for further good fortune was made. The instructor lighted the pipe and offered the prayer.

Previous to this a large buffalo-chip had been procured; this was placed on the ground before the instructor, and between him and the fire. The instructor took in his mouth a piece of bitterroot and some leaves of the white sage, and masticated them a little. The learner stood before the instructor and held his hands out before him, palms up and edges together; then the instructor spat ceremonially on the palm of each hand, and the young man made the ceremonial motions.³

³The instructor blows, or spits, the root at five points on the palms—the base of the left thumb, base of the left forefinger, base of the right forefinger, base of the right thumb, and then at the point where the hands come together, about halfway from the tip of the little finger to the wrist; in other words, in the four directions and in the middle. Then rubbing the palms together, he passes the right hand over the right leg from ankle to thigh, the left hand over the right arm from wrist to shoulder, the right hand over the left arm from shoulder to wrist, and the left hand over the left leg from hip to ankle. The two hands, palms down and fingers pointing backward, are then placed on the head and moved apart from the middle line down over the sides of the head and ears. Sometimes after doing this the hands are rested on the chest, the right hand usually above the left. Or, the instructor may blow on the young man's hands and he



Unknown Cheyenne warriors

The scalp was now placed on the buffalo-chip, flesh side up. The instructor sat close by the young man and directed each of the various operations. The learner took from the fire a bit of charcoal and rubbed

then makes the motions. A root may not always be available and the motions are frequently made without its use and consist merely of holding the hands in the proper position, blowing at the required points and passing the hands over legs, arms, and head.



it over both sides of a knife, from hilt to point; he held the knife over the scalp and said, "May we again conquer these enemies; and, if we do so, I will cut this again in the same way." With the point of the knife he now made a cross-cut over the scalp from north to south, and another from east to west, always beginning at the edge of the skin away from himself, or toward the fire, and drawing the knife toward him. The point of the knife passed through the flesh still remaining on the skin and down to the skin, dividing this flesh or fascia into four sections. The learner

now took the scalp in his hands, and, beginning at the outer side of the circle, shaved off the flesh from the quadrant toward the east and placed it on the buffalo-chip. Next he shaved off from the skin the quadrant toward the south, and the flesh so taken was put in its place on the buffalo-chip. The quadrants toward the west and the north were then taken off in order and placed on the chip. Thus, the four sections of flesh trimmed from the scalp lay on the buffalo-chip in their proper relations.

Now some young man was called and was told to carry the buffalo-chip away, and leave it on the prairie. Before he started, the learner told him that he must ask the *maiyun* to take pity on him, that he might be aided to count a coup.

The young man now bent a willow twig, already provided, into a hoop, lashing the ends together with a sinew. Then with sinew and awl the margin of the scalp was sewed to the hoop to stretch it. If the hoop was too large and the scalp did not reach it, the scalp was made larger by cutting short holes about the margin and parallel to it. The sewing was done from east to south, to west, to north, and to east. A slender willow pole six feet long, trimmed and peeled, and sharpened at the butt, with a notch cut in the other end, had already been prepared. By a string tied to the hoop the scalp was fastened to this pole, the sharpened butt of which was then thrust into the ground. If convenient, all this was done on the day the scalp was taken, at all events as soon as possible. When traveling, the willow pole to which the scalp was attached was carried on the left arm. The scalp was taken back to camp on this pole and remained attached to it during all the dancing that took place.

Among the Cheyennes the scalp dances of modern times have not been at all the same as those of earlier days. The last of those, I am told, took place in 1852.

SCALP DANCE

Anyone familiar with Indians and Indian ways will understand that the various dances that they practice are not merely haphazard jumpings up and down and posturings, to the music of chance singing. The ceremony of the various dances is perfectly well defined, and the songs are well known and as unvarying as if they had been printed. There was an established ceremony about the practice of the old-time scalp dance. While in a sense a triumph dance, it was also very

largely social in character. The account which I give of it came to me from George Bent.

These old-time scalp dances were directed by a little group of men called *Hēē mān ēh*, "halfmen-halfwomen," who usually dressed as old men. All belonged to the same family or group to which Oak (*Ōūmsb*) belonged. This family was called *Ōttōba nīh*, "Bare legs." Of these halfmen-halfwomen there were at that time five. They were men, but had taken up the ways of women; even their voices sounded between the voice of a man and that of a woman. They were very popular and especial favorites of young people, whether married or not, for they were noted matchmakers. They were fine love talkers. If a man wanted to get a girl to run away with him and could get one of these people to help him, he seldom failed. When a young man wanted to send gifts for a young woman, one of these halfmen-halfwomen was sent to the girl's relatives to do the talking in making the marriage.

The five men above referred to were named Wolf Walking Alone, Buffalo Wallow, Hiding Shield Under His Robe, Big Mule, and Bridge. All these men died a long time ago; but in more recent times there were two such men, one living among the Northern Cheyennes and the other among the Southern. These men had both men's names and women's names. The one among the Northern Cheyennes was named Pipe and his woman's name was Pipe Woman. He died in 1868. The one who lived with the Southern Cheyennes was named Good Road and Good Road Woman. He died in 1879. These were the last two of these people in the Cheyenne tribe.

When a war-party was preparing to start out, one of these persons was often asked to accompany it, and, in fact, in old times large war-parties rarely started without one or two of them. They were good company and fine talkers. When they went with war-parties they were well treated. They watched all that was being done, and in the fighting cared for the wounded, in which they were skillful, for they were doctors or medicine men.

After a battle the best scalps were given to them, and when they came in sight of the village on their return they carried these scalps on the ends of poles. When they neared the village the men who carried the pipes—the leaders of the war-party and the halfmen-halfwomen carrying the scalps—went ahead of the party and ran along outside the village, waving the scalps tied to the poles. This took place usually in the

early morning, so that the village should be taken by surprise. The old men, the women, and the children rushed out to meet the war-party. If the members of a war-party had their faces blackened when they came in, this showed that the party had not lost any of its members. If one of the party had been killed, the scalps were thrown away and there were no scalp dances on the return. If a person had counted a coup and had been killed, the scalp dance went on just as if no one had been killed. It was a great honor for a person to count coup first, and then afterward to be killed in the same fight. His relations did not mourn for him, but, instead, joined in the scalp dance performed that night.

The great scalp dance took place in the evening in the center of the village. The halfmen-halfwomen went to each lodge and told the owner to send some firewood to the center of the village for the big dance that was to take place that night. As the people brought the wood, the halfmen-halfwomen built it up in a conical pile, in the shape of a lodge, by standing the sticks on end. All about and under it was put dried grass ready for the fire at any time. This pile of wood was called "skunk" (*hkā' ō*). The "skunk" was lighted when a majority of the good singers with their drums reached the place. The singers were chiefly middle-aged men, all married. Then the singers and drummers began their songs, and everybody came to the dance, all of them painted red and black. All the older persons had their faces and bodies painted black. The men wore no shirts, and the old women had their bodies blackened from the waist up. In the center of the village the drummers stood in a row, facing the opening in the circle. The young men stood in a row facing the north; the young women stood in a row facing the young men, and so looking south. The old women and the old men took their places down at the lower end of the young people, and faced west. The halfmen-halfwomen took their places in the middle of this square and were the managers of the dance. No one was allowed in the middle of the square except these persons.

The performance now commenced. The women began to dance in line toward the center, and the young men all walked around behind the drummers to the girls' side of the square, placed themselves behind their sweethearts, and each put one arm through an arm of one of the girls and danced with her in that way. This was called "the sweethearts' dance."

The next dance was called "the match-making

dance,” and the songs sung were different from those sung in the one before. If in this dance there were two of these halfmen-halfwomen, one went over to the line of young men and one to the line of young women and asked the different dancers whom they would like for partners. Then the two halfmen-halfwomen came together in the center and told one another whom to select. All this time the singers and drummers were making their music. The halfmen-halfwomen then walked to the young men and took them by the robes and led them across to where their sweethearts were standing, and made the men stand by the girls. In this dance no one might begin to dance until every woman had her partner. Two men might not stand together. Men always stood between women.

After all the women had their partners, all those in this row danced toward the center and then danced back, not turning at all. Several times they danced back and forward; then the halfmen-halfwomen said to the young men, “Go back to your places.”

If the night was dark the big fire was kept up by the boys, but if the moon was full less firelight was needed.

After a time the halfmen-halfwomen called out the third dance, telling what dance it was. The young men and young women danced toward each other in two long rows, and then danced back again. After a time the halfmen-halfwomen called out, “Select your partners,” and each man crossed over to get his sweetheart as a partner, and the young women when told to select their partners also crossed over and met their sweethearts. After all had partners—for the men and the women were equal in number—they formed a ring around the big fire and danced about it. In this circling dance the drummers and singers also joined the circle, and the whole ring danced to the left about the fire. The old women and the old men were in the center of the ring, holding the scalps which they waved in the air. The halfmen-halfwomen danced around outside the ring, always toward the right. With the scalps tied to poles they kept the young girls and the boys away from the dancers, for the boys and girls were afraid of the scalps. In this way they kept the children from crowding close to the dancers.

After dancing for some time in this way, the halfmen-halfwomen told the drummers and singers to put the women inside in this round dance. While the young men were going around the ring, now and then

one of them would step inside and put an arm around his sweetheart’s neck. After this had gone on for some time, all fell back as before into their old places—the drummers and singers to their places, and the young men and women to theirs.

Soon the fourth dance was called by the halfmen-halfwomen, and the singers started up a different song for this. This dance was called “the slippery dance.” In this only women participated, and in pairs. These women danced up to their sweethearts and took hold of their robes and then danced back to the center, leading the young men out. The young men walked after those who were holding them and were held by their sweethearts until the men’s sisters had presented to the sweethearts a ring or a bracelet. This process was called “setting them free.” Sometimes a young fellow went up and presented a ring or a bracelet to have his friend set free.

After this dance the halfmen-halfwomen told the dancers to rest for a time and asked that someone should bring water for the dancers. The assembly partly broke up. Women would go away to tie up their legs, for, as they wore long deerskin dresses, and the next dance was to be a stooping dance, the dresses might get in their way, be stepped on, and trip them. This was the last dance, called “the galloping buffalo-bull dance.”

When all had returned the halfmen-halfwomen told the people to sit down, and all took their places. The drummers and singers also sat down. When the singing and drumming began three or four women arose and danced toward the men, and when they were close to them stooped down and turned their backs toward the men and danced before them. Then just as many men as there were women stood up and danced, joining the women; the men stooped also, just like the women. More women danced out and men joined them, and at length all the men and women came together and the whole party danced in a long row, all stooping down, dancing like a bull galloping. The halfmen-halfwomen would then say, “Go round in a circle,” and all the dancers stood erect and began the circle dance, or round dance, while the drummers and singers joined them in the circle. In this round dance everyone sang as they went around. By this time it was nearly morning, and the dance at last broke up, the people returning to their homes.

These were all scalp dances.

WARRIOR SOCIETIES AND CONTRARIES

THE soldier bands of the Cheyennes are six in number; of these four are ancient, and are foreshadowed in the Culture Hero stories of the people, while the other two (the Crazy Dogs and the Bowstring Soldiers) are modern and have not existed for many generations.¹ Besides these, a seventh band consisted merely of the forty-four chiefs of the tribe who had their own organization, and certain dances peculiar to themselves. These soldier bands are as follows:

1. *Wōbksēh'hētāniu*, Kit Fox men; commonly called Fox Soldiers.
2. *Hīm'ōwēyūbk'is* (Meaning uncertain); commonly called "Elk Soldiers".
3. *Hotā'mitā'niu*, Dog Men.
4. *Mābōhe'wās*, Red Shields; also called Bull Soldiers, *Hotu'anūt'kiu*.
5. *Hotā'mi māsāu*, Crazy Dogs.
6. *Hīm'ā'tāno'his*, Bowstrings.
7. *Wih'iu nūt'kiū*, Chief Soldiers.

These soldier bands included a large number, but not all, of the able-bodied and ambitious men of the tribe, from youth to old age. They were the organized military force of the camp, and acted as its police force. To them was entrusted the enforcement of the orders of the chiefs. Since, in the Indian camp, public opinion was the ruling force, and since the soldiers constituted a majority of the bravest and most influential men in the tribe, the soldier bands were often consulted by the chiefs on important matters relating to peace or war. Sometimes one or more of these societies, acting unitedly, might force the tribe to adopt some certain course of action that it was not generally

¹ Soldier Wolf, a middle-aged and well-informed Northern Cheyenne, believed that the names of the soldier bands were changed at regular intervals. Every four years, he said, they came together for the purpose of changing the names of the soldier bands. On the occasion of the change, while all the bands were dancing, an old man would get up and call out to the soldiers, "Now, all you people, from this day forth you will call the Wolf Soldiers the Elk Soldiers, and you will let the old name lie right here on the ground." If Soldier Wolf is right in this, it would account for certain other names of soldier bands which are sometimes heard, but which do not appear to be generally known. Such names are *Īmo'yūk he'tān iu*, translated "Strong-heart men," and *Wōbk pōhūm he'tān iu*, "White-horse men."

desired to take, or might even oblige some priest or important man to perform an act that he felt to be wrong or to threaten harm to the tribe. Such a case occurred about 1836, when one of the soldier bands forced White Thunder, the keeper of the medicine arrows, to renew them at a time when the spirits were unfavorable.²

Boys from thirteen to sixteen years of age might elect to join almost any of the soldier bands. The two or three growing sons of a member of one of the bands would be likely to join the father's band. The father and mother of the candidate usually accompanied him to the first dance of the society that he attended, and two or three horses were then given away by them, or by some relative of the boy, perhaps to the chief of the band, or to some one of the dancers, or even to a person entirely unconnected with the society—it might be to some poor woman. A gift must be made on the occasion. The candidate was received without special ceremony. He was dressed for the dance before he left his own lodge.

There were always some young and active men who belonged to no soldier society.

In old times a man might belong to one society only, and must leave it before he could join another. There was keen rivalry among the soldier bands; and even today one may sometimes hear old men boasting about these matters, each declaring that the society to which he belonged was the best. The Kit Fox Soldiers always claimed superiority over the others, and—among the Northern Cheyennes at least—when a list of the bands is given, that society is usually mentioned first.³ The Crazy Dogs were said to be considered the "toughs" of the soldier bands, by which I suppose is meant those with the least feeling of responsibility.

To each soldier band belonged four young women, usually girls—though some might be married—of good family. They joined in the dance, and sometimes sat by the singers and sang with them. If the soldiers made a dance, or went from one place to another, feasting, the women were with them, but if the camp was moving the girls traveled with their families. Their duties were chiefly social; that is to say, they were present at meetings of the band, took part in the singing and dancing, and sometimes cooked for

² *The Fighting Cheyennes*, p. 42.

³ It is suggestive that of the Blackfeet secret societies or soldier bands, the most important is also named after the kit fox (*sin'ō pāh*).



Little Wolf and Dull Knife (Morning Star) (seated)
(See page 49 for a picture of Little Wolf as an old man.)

the soldiers. They were not necessarily related to anyone in the band, but were supposed to be girls of the best families in the camp. If one of them resigned, or for any reason fell out, another was selected to fill her place by the soldier chiefs. When a girl had been chosen, two young men were sent to her lodge to bring her. The position was an honorable one.

Such a girl was spoken of as *nūt ūhk e ā*, female soldier. Usually a good-looking girl was chosen, who devoted herself to the position in much the same spirit that a nun gives herself up to her vocation. The girl was not compelled to retain this position; if she wished to marry, she might resign, and often did so.

Sometimes a soldier band started off to war as a body. The members did not leave the camp together, but went off by twos and threes and met at some designated place on the road. They might be joined by other young men who did not belong to the organization.

If, as often happened—for the soldier bands were composed of the bravest warriors in the tribe and were constantly losing men in battle—the number of any soldier band became greatly reduced, a meeting was called, for which a large, double lodge was put up, and it was heralded through the camp that recruits were needed for this particular band. Then very likely many young men joined it.

A man might resign from one soldier band and afterward join another. If the chief of one of the soldier bands should be appointed one of the four principal chiefs of the tribe, and accepted the appointment, he then ceased to be a member of the soldier band.

SOLDIER CHIEFS

If a man was elected chief of a soldier band and declined to accept the election, he did not by this declination forfeit his place in the soldier band, but remained a member and another man was chosen as chief. The chief of a soldier band occupied a position of great responsibility, which some men felt to be too serious a burden to assume.

The position was understood to be one of such danger that death was always to be expected—a soldier chief was chosen to be killed. Only a man at all times ready to face death could be selected for this office. The soldier chief possessed a high sense of the dignity of his position, and if he thought he was not treated with the consideration due him, he was ready to demand his rights. His position was always

respected, partly because people generally feared to quarrel with him.

The fact that they had been soldier chiefs did much to make Dull Knife and Little Wolf noted men in the tribe. Both were brave and good fighters, but they were very different. Dull Knife was a brave man and a good fighter, but fought merely as an individual leader of men. He was not an organizer, and did not plan his battles.

Little Wolf, when a soldier chief, always led his men; he never sent anyone ahead of him. So he always counted the first coup. But besides fighting himself, he made a plan for each battle. During the progress of a fight Little Wolf constantly called out words of instruction and encouragement to his warriors, telling them to fight hard and advising them how to fight efficiently. He thought not merely of his individual deeds, but of the battle as a whole. In other words, he was what few Indians have been—an organizer. His march north from the Indian Territory in 1878 showed him to be a great general.

Little Wolf always considered a situation in advance and planned what should be done. He possessed great foresight, tried to think of and to provide for every contingency, and to leave nothing to chance. It is reported that on more than one occasion when planning a fight and directing his men what to do someone interrupted him and proposed a different course of action. Little Wolf walked up to the man and struck him, ordering him to cease talking, and saying that he was interfering with his plans. After Little Wolf had been chosen one of the principal chiefs, his manner became much milder.

Tangle Hair, a former chief of the Dog Soldiers, who had many times been with Little Wolf in situations of danger and difficulty, where other men were very much alarmed, said that Little Wolf was never seen to show signs of fear. Little Wolf's death in battle was predicted for many years, but he died of old age.

A soldier chief might commit an act which automatically removed him from his office, as happened in the year 1837, when Porcupine Bear, the chief of the Dog Soldiers, took part in the killing of a tribesman. This act of itself caused him to cease to be the chief, and no formal action by the soldier band was required. In a short time the place held by Porcupine Bear was filled by the choice of another man.



CERTAIN CAMP DUTIES

Two important duties of the soldiers in the camp had to do with the renewing of the arrows and the building of the medicine lodge. When the arrows were to be renewed, the soldiers were sent about over the country to the different camps to notify the people and to ask them to gather at the place appointed for the ceremony. The arrows were renewed on the occasion of the killing of a tribesman by a member of the tribe. The ceremony was thought to insure the health of the people and an abundance of buffalo, cherries, berries, roots, grass, and all animals for the coming year, and was helpful to the people. All desired to share in its beneficent influence, and it was unusual for anyone to refuse to come in—all were eager to be present. If any little camp of people failed to come in when ordered, there would probably be much sickness among them, and some might die.

While the arrows were being renewed, a guard of soldiers was stationed about the camp. No noise was permitted; no one was allowed to do anything that was bad. No one might be cross, speak angrily, or dispute with anyone; all must be good-natured and

friendly. After the ceremony, the people separated and went their several ways. Now all would have good fortune, health, and plenty of food.

Among the common everyday duties of the soldier bands was the work of seeing that the camp moved promptly, according to the orders of the chiefs, and of leading the marching column. If the camp was to move next day, the chiefs came together the evening before, and called into the lodge with them the chiefs of the band of soldiers then in charge of the camp. The chiefs, who had talked the matter over and decided what should be done, announced to the soldier chiefs: "Tomorrow we will move camp; every lodge must go. We will camp at such and such a place." That night the order was cried through the camp, and in the morning the soldiers rode about through the village and saw that every lodge was taken down. Then they started toward the camping place, marching ahead of the others, and when they reached the spot, they sat on the ground in a line just beyond where the camp was to be, and no one passed them.

If on any day orders were given that there should be no hunting, the soldiers saw to it that no one hunted. If anyone started out for this purpose, he was



Tangle Hair with granddaughter



Left to right: White Antelope, Alights On The Cloud, and Little Chief

followed and brought back, and if he did not submit promptly, he was likely to be well whipped, and perhaps even some of his property might be destroyed. An example of the power of the soldiers, and of the way in which they treated men who neglected or disobeyed orders, is shown by an incident of many years ago. Tall Bull and Spotted Tail, two of the men mentioned, afterward became well-known chiefs of the Cheyennes and Sioux, respectively.

A large party of Cheyennes and Sioux was out looking for the Pawnee camp. Tall Bull, Wolf Mule, and White Antelope—Cheyennes—with Good Bear, Spotted Tail, and Yellow Eyes—Sioux—were sent out as scouts, to search for it. They had been ordered to find the Pawnee village, and then to come in and

report, but were told that if unexpectedly they came upon a Pawnee on the prairie, they should kill him; they must not let him go away, to report to the enemy's camp.

The scouts failed to find the Pawnee camp, but they discovered a single Pawnee going along on foot, carrying something on his back. They charged on him, and he dropped his pack and his robe, but instead of running away, he ran toward them. Good Bear rode up to him to touch him, but the Pawnee shot his horse through the body with an arrow, and the horse ran a little way and fell. White Antelope rushed toward him, and the Pawnee shot his horse in the breast. He turned off. Wolf Mule then charged, and the Pawnee ran toward him. Wolf Mule turned

to ride away, and the Pawnee shot him in the back, but the point of the arrow struck one of his silver hair plates in the center, piercing it so that the point of the arrow went an inch or two into the muscles of the back. The Cheyennes and Sioux then stood back and did not attack the Pawnee any more. He made signs to them, saying: "Come on! Kill me! I am a chief; it will be a good thing for you if you kill me; if you do this, you will have killed a chief. I am like the sun," and he pointed toward it.⁴ The Pawnee had fought so well that the Cheyennes and Sioux feared to continue the fight, and when he made these signs they drew off and left him.

When the scouts returned to the main war-party of Cheyennes and Sioux, it was seen that something had happened. Good Bear had no horse, and was riding behind another man; and White Antelope's horse was lame. The scouts did not wish to tell of the fight with the Pawnee, and how he got away. The leaders said nothing, but some of the young men in the camp got hold of Wolf Mule, who was stiff from his wound, and he told them what had happened. Then the Sioux soldiers quirted Spotted Tail and Yellow Eyes unmercifully, and the Dog Soldiers whipped the Cheyennes—all except Wolf Mule—for their disobedience of orders—letting the Pawnee get away. Wolf Mule was spared because he had told what had happened.

The war-party went on and found Good Bear's horse, dead. Later they found where the Pawnees had been camped, nearly a day's journey from the place where the fight had taken place; so that the Pawnee must have been a long way from his camp. They did not follow the Pawnees, but went home without accomplishing anything.

DOG SOLDIERS AND THE DOG ROPE

The dog rope (*bō tām' tsit*) was peculiar to the Dog Soldiers. This was a strip of dressed buffalo-hide as wide as the hand and eight or ten feet long, handsomely ornamented with feathers and porcupine quills. Often it was a strip of cow-hide cut from the

⁴ A person who is very handsome is said to be like the sun. Also a very brave man may boast to his enemies that he is like the sun—a big chief. If they kill him they will have done a good thing, and can dance a great deal. Cheyennes, Arapahoes, Arikaras, Kiowas, and Pawnees, all use this figure.

top of a lodge. Usually a loop at one end passed over the right shoulder and under the left arm of the wearer, and at the other end was a short braided string, to which was tied a red-painted, sharp-pointed wooden pin, like a little picket-pin. The dog rope did not always pass over the wearer's shoulder; sometimes it was attached to the owner's belt by a string.

In battle, the man who carried the dog rope, if he dismounted to fight, might stick the pin in the ground, and by doing so he pledged himself not to retreat from the spot unless some one of his own party pulled up the pin. He himself might not pull it up, on penalty of proving himself a coward—losing his manhood—and being thenceforth the laughing-stock of the camp. His own people might free him, but if they did not, he must die on that spot. Only brave men carried the dog rope, for he who had one must use it, and to use it might mean death.

In a hard fight, if the man who wore a dog rope saw his party about to retreat, he might stick his pin in the ground and blow his whistle to encourage the others and to show that he would not yield. Then, if his party was driven back, unless one of them pulled up the pin and set him free, he died there. After a comrade had thus pulled up the pin, he struck the man with his quirt, and so literally drove him from the field.

Tall Bull, a Northern Cheyenne, was present on an occasion when the dog rope was used. Little Man was at the front, leading the charge, and when the Cheyennes began to retreat, he sprang off his horse, thrust the pin in the ground, and stood fast. Then all the Cheyennes stopped running, and began to fight harder, and to yell and struggle. They were slowly pushed back, however, and presently a Cheyenne, wearing a war-bonnet, sprang from his horse, pulled up Little Man's pin, and struck him two or three times with his whip, whereupon Little Man jumped on his horse and rode off.

There were but four dog ropes—in two grades of importance. Those with pins about four inches long were the more important. The Cheyennes, Arapahoes, Kiowas,⁵ and Kiowa-Apaches all used these, with essentially the same customs.

When a Dog Soldier had carried a dog rope as long as he wished, he began to think of handing it over to another, and let it be known he was now ready

⁵ James Mooney, *Calendar History of the Kiowa Indians*, pp. 284-285.



White Horse, a chief of the Dog Soldiers

to part with it. At some dance, when all were present in the lodge, the eight principal men of the society chose one of the bravest of the young men to be the successor of him who had worn the rope. He who was chosen to receive it was obliged to pay heavily for it. All his relations were likely to contribute to help him. When all was ready, singing was begun, and the man who had carried the dog rope placed it on the ground

in the lodge, and the relatives of the one who was to have it piled up near it robes and blankets, guns, ammunition, sticks—representing horses—and other property. The owner of the rope might then take it up and put it down in another place, and the relatives of the other young man might pile up more things there. The owner might even move it a third time.

When, however, he thought sufficient had been

given, he put the rope over the purchaser, and the dancing began, the seller leading off, by taking hold of the rope which was around the purchaser, and leading him about.

A Dog Soldier who possessed a dog rope, like one who owned a scalp shirt, ignored the whole matter if his wife ran off with another man. In old times, it is said, the owner of a war-bonnet acted in the same way. Yet sometimes the eloper—who perhaps was a little uneasy as to what might happen—might persuade one or more chiefs to take a pipe, with two or three horses, to the injured husband. They entered the lodge, turned to the right, placed the pipe on the ground before the man, and said to him, “There are your horses.” If he lighted the pipe and smoked, the incident was closed.

In breaking camp, the clans generally moved out by individuals, whenever the women found themselves ready to go; but the Dog Soldiers might not move out individually: they waited for one another, and all moved out in a body. Thus the Dog Soldiers always brought up the rear, and were in fact the rear-guard of the marching column.

The Dog Soldiers were under more severe discipline than the other soldier bands, and usually kept very much by themselves. Made up largely of especially brave men, and on this account looked up to by the tribe, they were often arbitrary, and not infrequently insisted that the whole camp should do as they wished. They were also more disposed to war against the whites than the others, and when the rest of the tribe was quiet and peaceful, they often started out on raids and war-parties, and were joined by other young men who did not belong to the band, but who wished to make names for themselves.

CONTRARIES AND THE CONTRARY LANCE

Among the Cheyennes there were certain men known as *Hobnühk'e*, a word which conveys the idea of doing precisely the reverse of what is said. They were called Contraries. There was no band or guild of these: they were merely individuals bound by certain beliefs. They were, however, braves of much importance, and were often entrusted with serious duties—even with leadership—in battle. For this reason it may be proper to speak of them in this place. There were usually two or three Contraries in the tribe. On occasions there may have been four, but this is regarded as doubtful.

These Contraries acted by opposites. If they wished to signify assent, they said “No.” If one requested a Contrary to go away, he came nearer. If asked to ride, he walked. If he called out to his woman, “Do not bring any more wood, we have plenty,” she knew that the wood in the lodge was exhausted and that more should be brought.

A man became a Contrary because he feared the thunder. He carried a peculiar lance which was the especial property of the Thunder, and a Contrary had no fear of being struck by lightning.

My old friend, Brave Wolf, for many years a Contrary, became one through fear. For years, whenever a heavy thunderstorm was approaching, he always believed he saw, standing on the clouds, a man holding a Contrary lance in his raised left hand. This vision caused him to fear the thunder—the lightning—and as from time to time it appeared to him more and more frequently, his fears grew stronger, so that, as he said, his fear of thunder became so great that he was foolish. At length, in a dream, the man that he had seen in the clouds told him that if he carried one of these bow-lances, he need no longer fear the Thunder. When the man told him this, he determined to have one.

Brave Wolf asked a Contrary in the tribe to give him his lance, and the Contrary did so. For it Brave Wolf paid eight horses and much other property, and from that time felt no fear of the Thunder. The spiritual power of this lance was very great; it was one of the most potent medicines of the tribe, handed down from long ago. A man who possessed one of these lances, and did what he ought to do, need not fear the Thunder; yet if he failed to treat the weapon reverently, the lightning might kill him.

Brave Wolf carried this lance for about ten years (1866 to 1876). While carrying it he was always painted red, and wore leggings, moccasins, and a blanket made of old lodge-skins. When he lay down, he had no bed to rest on. The Contrary might not even sit on a bed. If he entered a lodge, the host or hostess at once moved things out of the way and the Contrary sat on the naked floor of the lodge. When he rose to go, the contrary passed white sage over the ground to purify it, for he always carried with him a bundle of the plant for use in the ceremony of purification.

The Contraries were not chiefs, they were merely braves. They bore the usual weapons carried by warriors, but besides, each carried one of these lances—



Contrary lance

Höbnühkawo', Contrary bow—shaped like a bow strung with two strings, but with a lance-head on one end,⁶ and adorned with various mysterious symbols. The lance was about five feet in length, and near one end was tied the stuffed skin of a bird (*maivish*, an oriole), in the South. In the North the Louisiana tanager, which has some red on the head instead of merely yellow or orange, was used for this purpose. The name came from the North. The red painting of the person and clothing of the thunder-bow bearer is said to have been in imitation of the color of this bird, which represents, they say, the body of the man who carries the thunder-bow. At each end of the lance, tied on with a white string of bear intestine, was a bunch of the feathers of owls, hawks, and eagles. When not in use, the lance was wrapped in a piece of tanned buffalo-hide. Its owner wore a cap or fillet of owl-feathers, and to the heel of each moccasin was attached the beard of a buffalo-bull. The braids of his hair were wrapped with strips of dressed buffalo-hide, each strip split at the end so as to make two little tags, something like those at the heel of a moccasin. A whistle of ash wood hung about the neck by a string of dressed buffalo-hide. It was five or six inches long and as thick as a man's finger.

⁶ Compare Morice, *Western Denes*, Trans. Canadian Inst., vol. IV, p. 60, March, 1894.

Lashed to the lance outside of the buffalo-hide wrapper was a short, forked stick, sharpened at the butt, painted red, and with two prongs of unequal length. When the lance was unwrapped for use in a fight, or for other purpose, the sharpened end of the forked stick was thrust in the ground, and the lance was rested on it, the point up, so that the point should not touch the ground. When the Contrary took up his lance to go into the fight, he might hand this stick to any young man to carry. It was supposed to give the young man good luck in battle, because it was one of the belongings of a great medicine. When the lance was first taken out of the wrapper, sweet grass was burned over a coal and the lance held over the smoke, and as this was done it was lightly shaken four times.

Only the Contrary himself might handle the lance; not even his wife might touch it. Occasionally, if a Contrary was obliged to leave his lance, to do something, he might give it to a man to hold, but after the Contrary had taken it back, a ceremony of purification must be performed on the one who had held it.

If in a fight the bearer of the thunder-lance was shot, or if his horse was shot, so that he was out of the fight, he might hand his lance to any man, to be used in the fight in counting coup. If he did this, the user must be purified after carrying the weapon. These bow-lances were sometimes called thunder-bows,

because they had the power to influence the thunder—that is, the lightning. Anyone who was careless about the possessions of a Contrary, or showed lack of respect for him, was likely to be killed by lightning.

In the camp, the Contrary lance was usually hung, by day, upon a pole which stood in the ground behind the lodge, and when the sun set, the pole was brought close to the back of the lodge and was leaned up against it. If, by any chance, the lance touched anyone, the person so touched must be rubbed off with a brush of white sage; or if, in riding a horse, the lance touched it—as it was quite sure to do—the horse, before being turned loose, must be wiped off with white sage and prayed over. If children playing about the camp knocked against the lance, or against the pole on which it hung, or if a horse did the same, the lightning was likely to kill them, unless they were thus purified.

In the lodge of a Contrary, no one slept at the back of the lodge; at night or in stormy weather this place was reserved for the thunder-bow. No one, not even the Contrary himself, might pass between the bow and the fire; only the pipe could pass there. No dogs were allowed in this lodge—the Contrary might not own dogs.

When going into a fight, the Contrary carried his thunder-bow in the hollow of his left arm. So long as he held the lance in the left hand, he might advance and retreat, fighting like anyone else, but if he shifted his lance to his right hand, and blew his whistle, then he might not turn back, but must rush upon the enemy, no matter how many guns were being shot at him; he was obliged to press on until he reached the enemy. When he passed the lance to his right hand, blew his whistle, and cried like a burrowing owl as he rushed toward his enemy, these various acts were thought to cause the bows of the enemy to break, if they were armed with bows, or, if they carried guns, they would cause them to miss fire. The thunder-bow was used to touch the enemy in counting coup; it was not a fighting weapon.

When transferred from left hand to right, the lance was not passed in front of the body, that is, before the face, but behind it, over the back of the neck. The point of the lance might not be turned toward the ground, except when the owner passed it from left hand to right behind his back; then he threw the point down slantwise toward the ground.⁷

When a charge was made, the Contrary must be off to one side by himself. If he rode behind or before anyone, it would bring bad luck to that person—perhaps his horse might break down. In the same way, on the march, the Contrary might not follow the trail made by the others, but must travel off to one side.

As no one might step in the tracks of a Contrary, nor he in those of anyone else, lest that person should become footsore and lame, so it was the duty of the Contrary to step in the tracks of enemies, in order that they might become exhausted and be overtaken. If an enemy stole horses from the tribe, it was part of the duty of the Contrary to pierce the tracks of the stolen horses with the points of his lance, for the same reason.

In the old days when the Cheyennes traveled chiefly on foot if a man became exhausted by running or marching, the possessor of a thunder-bow might put sprigs of white sage in the moccasins of the person to renew his strength. Scouts who were about to be sent out often went to the bearer of the thunder-bow and asked him so to treat their moccasins that they might not become tired out on their journey.

Contraries have sometimes been killed in battle. Bear Foot was killed by the Crows, on the Little Big Horn River. His people hung his lance up in a big tree near where he fell. No one would have dared to take it away.

It was proper for the Contraries to repair and renew their lances at the time the medicine arrows were renewed. When this was done there must be no noise whatsoever. The old men who went into the lodge to see the thunder-bows renewed, did not wear good clothing; their garments were old and worn, and the men were painted red. While they were in the lodge, it was not permitted to scratch the head with the fingers; a little pointed stick must be used for the purpose.

In the old times the men who carried thunder-bows were usually single men, or, at least, men who at the time had no wives. The case is cited of Gray Head, who in 1865 had a thunder-bow made for him, and because he had been married the occurrence created a scandal, and his power was not highly regarded. In later years married men had these thunder-bows made for them, but they were not considered real thunder-bows, and the power of the owners was not very highly esteemed.

When a man felt that he must become a Contrary, he tried to take over the position from someone who

⁷ *The Fighting Cheyennes*, p. 232.

held it. For this he was obliged to pay a large price—horses, arms, clothing, and robes. Though carrying with it much hardship and many responsibilities, the office was one of great power and importance.

Anyone who might dream of the thunder-bow, or of the thunder, might ask a Contrary for his lance, the symbol of his power. Until someone did this, the Contrary could not escape from his office. It had come to him as an order, and if no one asked for the thunder-bow, the Contrary was obliged to keep it. Thus a man might be a Contrary for a long time. Men have carried these lances so long that they felt they could no longer endure the responsibility, and having made a rawhide sack, they have put the lances away for a time.

A Contrary might not associate on terms of equality or familiarity with the rest of the camp. He might not joke, nor have a good time, but was obliged always to be alone and apart. People might visit his lodge, but they were expected to do so with dignity and decorum, moving slowly, and not remaining long. The Contrary's lodge, and most of his possessions, were painted red. He ate and drank from a special dish, made from the horn of a mountain sheep, which no one else might use, or even touch. After the owner had used it, the dish was wiped out with sage, and was put away.

Thus the ownership of a thunder-bow involved not a little hardship. The care, responsibility, and loneliness which went with it were not pleasant. A Contrary might be in a crowd only during a fight, when all were charging. In the camp he was always alone—often on a distant hill by himself. If there were two Contraries in the camp, they might be together, but no one else might associate with them, and a single one led a lonely life. No one became a Contrary by choice; but from the warning which came to him there was no escape. Men who for many years had been Contraries have spoken to me with great feeling of the hardships of their office, and in the same way it sometimes happened that a man might feel the possession and care of a shield too great a burden for him.



WEAPONS

THE BOW

Of the primitive utensils of the Cheyenne, perhaps the most important was the bow, on which he depended largely for subsistence, and almost altogether for defense. Yet it would seem that it is not very long since the Cheyennes began to use bows and arrows in war, and that it is still more recently that they learned how to feather the arrow. The Cheyennes say that the first people with whom they fought on their journey toward the plains were the Assiniboines, whom they met after that tribe had obtained guns. Some of the Cheyennes were killed and the others ran away. The Assiniboines tell the same story, and say that in this first great fight with the Cheyennes the latter were armed only with sharpened sticks and did not seem to know what guns were. In their fighting they ran up close to the Assiniboines, who easily killed many of them.

From the traditions told by old people today, we may picture the development of the arrow from a mere unfeathered dart to an implement which had the accuracy and considerably more than the range of the best old-fashioned revolving pistol. It is obvious that the tradition of the Indians cannot go back to the origin of the bow, but at least we have some accounts of its manufacture and improvement.

Some of the earliest stories of the Cheyennes refer to a time when they ensnared the animals which formed a part of their subsistence, and then beat them to death with clubs. They say that at that time they had no bows, but their weapons were chiefly clubs, or stones tied to the end of sticks. With these they killed animals after they had been snared or had been driven into some situation from which they could not escape.

Nevertheless, the Cheyennes developed a very excellent bow which they used with great skill. The modern bows made by the Cheyennes were short—three-and-one-half to four-and-one-half feet was the usual length. They were made of wood, or of the horns of animals—the elk, the buffalo, or the mountain sheep. A certain juniper tree (*Juniperus scopulorum*) was regarded as furnishing the best bow wood used in later times.¹ Usually a small upright tree was chosen,

¹ From the twigs of this tree the early whites of the Missouri

or a stick was split from a larger tree if the grain of the piece was straight. The heart wood was not used. This juniper wood was used for their bows by many of the Missouri River Indians, including Assiniboines, Arikaras, Mandans, and Hidatsas. After they had reached the country where it grew, Osage orange (*bois d'arc*) was used to some extent, more especially in the southern country, where juniper was not always to be had. It furnished a good bow wood. Cherry was not good, for "it did not have the right spring." In later times, when hickory became accessible, this was a highly esteemed bow wood.



Unknown Cheyenne warrior

Bows of elk-horn were made in two ways. In one, the maker filed flat, and glued together, a number of straight pieces of the horn, and then wrapped them with sinew. Another method was to take a whole long, more or less crooked, antler and treat it in one piece. If such a bow was to be made, an ant-

ler as nearly straight as possible was chosen, and was then whittled, scraped, and rubbed until fairly thin. It was soaked in water, and little by little more of it was taken off until it had become quite thin. It was still crooked, but by heating it before the fire and greasing and working it, it became more or less limber. In this crooked form, the bow was finally completed, being shaped, the nocks cut for the string, and the whole implement finished. During all this time it was constantly being worked and made more pliable, and finally, when it had become quite flexible, the bow was firmly lashed to a straight stick and left there until entirely dry and straight. Sinew was now applied to the back, and when this had been done and the glue had dried and hardened, the implement was complete and ready for use. Such bows were fine to look at, but they were more for show than for use. They did not last very long, but were likely to break when they became old. Bows were made of buffalo-horn by gluing together a number of straight pieces and wrapping the splices with sinew, as elsewhere described.

Bows made of the horn of the mountain sheep were durable and very useful, and long ago many of these were possessed by the Cheyennes. They were made by splitting the ram's horn into long pieces, which were steamed or boiled, drying them straight, and then binding and gluing them together. After this, they were backed with sinew and were very strong and springy. There was another fashion of making the sheep-horn bow: The horn was cut in a spiral about the horn and so across the grain. This worm of horn was then boiled and stretched, and again boiled and again stretched along a long stick, until the piece was made straight. The strip was thick and wide, and the bow consisted of this single piece, not of several strips. After it had been made straight, it was whittled and scraped down to proper thickness, and was then rubbed with a smooth stone until it became everywhere smooth. The sinew was now applied to the back with glue, and the sinew covering was smoothed with a buffalo-rib. The bow was now lashed to a straight pole to dry. Sometimes it was left straight and sometimes was given a double curve. In the latter case, two little blocks or bundles were placed under the bow, each about one-quarter way from either end, and the bow was firmly tied down close to the pole in the middle and near the ends. When fully dry, the bow was trimmed and smoothed down, any loose ends of sinew being cut off with a sharp knife. After this, the ends where the bowstring fitted on were wrapped

River distilled an oil which, mixed with grease, made a good salve.

with sinew, applied with glue. Finally, when the bow was finished, a coating of glue was applied to the back, and on this wet glue was scattered burnt gypsum to whiten the back of the bow. The under surface, where the horn showed, might be painted with any color. The last thing put on was the deerskin handhold, which was wrapped on the bow in a string about three-quarters of an inch wide, and held in place by glue. The whitening for the back was applied to all the best bows, no matter of what material they were made. Even hickory bows were often so treated.

The glue used in the manufacture of bows and arrows was made from the chippings from the rawhide of the neck of a buffalo-bull, or even from the shavings cut from any buffalo-hide in the process of thinning it down. These shavings were boiled with water, and made a strong glue, which was sometimes almost as thick as molasses. This jelly-like soup was often eaten, and was very good.

Not all men made bows in the same way. Different men had different methods, and each thought his way the best. Also, at different periods of time different methods prevailed—the fashions changed. In applying the sinew, some people laid it on the back of the bow in wide long pieces, while others thought it better to split it and apply it in small threads.

In ancient times they made bowstrings of the twisted bark of an unidentified tall weed (a milkweed), and later of hair, using any kind that was strong enough, and twisting it tight by means of a wooden hook. It is impossible to say when sinew bowstrings replaced those made of hair, but it was not until after women had learned that sinew could be used as thread for sewing. They had killed some large animal and had brought in the meat. A woman who was cutting up this animal noticed the great tendon which lies under the shoulder blade, and said to her husband, "I believe that from this a bowstring could be made that would be better than one of hair." They tried it and found it good, and have ever since used this for their bowstrings. So they owe their bowstrings to a woman. Bowstrings were made of the sinew of the buffalo-bull.

There was a wide variation in the power of different bows. Some men could not bend the bows commonly used by other men. I estimate the extreme range of the Cheyenne bow at about four hundred yards; in other words, it will throw an arrow to that distance. Some men declare that the best bowmen could send an arrow five hundred yards, and old men

say that in days of the old smoothbore flintlock trade guns the bow at long-distance shooting was a more effective weapon than the gun.

Stories are told of an occasion when the Cheyennes armed with bows kept off an attacking party of Crows who had some guns. There were different modes of handling the string and arrow in drawing the bow. Some Cheyennes merely held the arrow between thumb and forefinger, and pulled straight back on the arrow and so on the string; others assisted this by having the middle finger pull on the string; while others still held the arrow between the forefinger and middle finger hooked over the string and held the arrow in its place by the thumb. Each man's way seemed to him the best, which only means that, having practiced this method most, he could produce the best results with it. In other words, the methods were individual and not tribal, as has been suggested.²

Quivers and bow-cases, sewed together and carried by a band over the right shoulder, were often made of otter, panther, and buffalo-calf skin, the tails usually being left attached to the skin and hanging down. All these animals were believed to possess spiritual power, and the use of their skins tended to impart some of this power to the user of the quiver.

ARROWS

Arrows were the most precious possessions of the primitive Indians. If a man wished to marry a girl, he might offer ten arrows as a gift to the girl's father. Men always gathered up their arrows, devoting much time to searching for them and trying never to lose one. They were too hard to get and cost too much effort to be wasted. In the same way, if the points were lost from the arrows, they searched for them long and carefully.

The old men who made the best arrows were proud of their skill and were greatly respected for it. There was a great difference in arrows, and it was essential for the best work that the shaft should be properly proportioned. The proportions between the shaft, head, and feather were quite definite, and if

² *Handbook of American Indians*, Bull. 30, Bureau American Ethnology, pt. I, p. 93, quotes Dr. Morse as describing four methods of holding the arrow and the bowstring; but the conclusions drawn as to these methods are erroneous. The methods described are merely those practiced by individuals.

these were preserved the arrow did excellent work; otherwise it was a failure. Great skill and judgment were required to make a perfect arrow. An arrow too light in the shaft would not fly steadily; one too heavy would not carry its force long enough. A good, well-balanced arrow, when it struck the mark, tilted up at the feather-end, while the feather-end of a bad arrow dropped down. At gatherings and feasts, men often spoke of such matters, telling how their arrows acted. The subject was of general interest, and when it was under discussion, those present always listened.

The Cheyennes were thought to have the best arrows of any Indians in their country. The old-time arrow makers always made arrows by tens, and those of each ten were the same; thus each man bought his arrows in tens and all were alike. Each arrow maker manufactured his arrows after his own fashion.

Arrowshaft Construction

Arrowshafts were usually made from the straight shoots of the cherry bush, but some arrow makers used the straight shoots of the currant, and others those of "red-willow" and rose. Such shoots were employed because most easily smoothed and straightened. The shoots were cut in regular lengths, according to the rule of the arrow maker, who usually measured the shafts on his arm, from the tip of the middle finger nearly halfway up the humerus. They were then tied up in bundles and hung up in the lodge until dry.

In collecting the sticks for arrowshafts, arrow makers were always careful in peeling them to see that they were strong enough to go through the straightening process, for it was deemed very unlucky for the maker and his family if he broke an arrowstick while straightening it. In handling his arrowsticks, the Cheyenne always pointed them toward the fire in looking at them to see if they were straight, and never allowed them to be directed toward anyone in the lodge.

When the arrowshafts that had been hung up in the lodge were thoroughly dry, they were taken down by the arrow maker and the bundle opened and inspected. Most of the shafts were nearly straight, and those which were not so were straightened by bending with an arrow-straightener. Often this was made from the spine of the vertebra of a large animal through which had been drilled a hole a little larger in diameter than the shaft's thickness; or sometimes the straightener was the horn of a female mountain

sheep, in which holes had been drilled. The arrow was passed through one of the holes and bent this way and that until perfectly straight. This work was often done also with the hands and the teeth.

In preparing the shaft of the arrow, three other important tools were used. These were: (1) grooved sandstone slabs for reducing the shaft; (2) a rib pierced with a circular hole into which extended a little projection from the margin of the hole—or a flint with a semicircular notch and a projection—for making the grooves in the shaft; and (3) a rib with a circular hole the exact size of the completed shaft, for standardizing the diameter of the arrow.

After the shaft was straightened, the two grooved blocks of sandstone, three or four inches long, with flat meeting faces, were used to reduce and to smooth and round the arrow. Placing the shaft in one groove, the other groove was fitted over it, and holding the two stones together with the left hand, the maker pulled the shaft back and forth to smooth it.

From the upper end of the feathers on one side of the shaft, toward the point of the arrow, a straight groove ran all the way to the arrow's head; on the other side a winding or zigzag groove was made, reaching from the feather to the arrowpoint. These grooves were made either with the bone or the flint instrument already mentioned. In the latter, a notch had been chipped out wide enough for the arrow to lie in, but in the middle of this notch was left a small projecting point of the flint. Holding this flint notch downward in the thumb and two fingers of the left hand, the maker placed the arrowshaft in the notch and with the right hand pulled it toward him, pulling straight for the straight groove and with a twisting motion for the zigzag one.

Much speculation has been indulged in as to the meaning of these grooves. The most popular explanation is that they were made for the purpose of permitting the blood to escape, so as to weaken the wounded animal, or that they symbolized the lightning, and so would be more fatal. What seems quite as probable is that these grooves may have been made to counteract the tendency of the wood to warp or spring and become crooked.

After the shaft had been brought down to the proper size and the grooves made in it, the shaft was thrust into and pushed through the circular hole in the rib standardizer with a twisting motion. This polished the shaft and at the same time left little fine ridges running about it which could be felt as the fin-

gers were passed over them, but were almost too small to be seen.

The arrow's flight depended largely on the feathers. If they were good and well put on, the arrow carried well. Turkey-feathers or buzzard-feathers were the best for arrows, because blood does not affect them. Feathers of hawks and eagles, if wet with blood, are injured by the wetting. However, the feathers of these birds were used for ceremonial arrows.

The Cheyennes tell of a time before the use of feathers on the arrow, when they were accustomed to shave up from the shaft of the arrow, all about the shaft, a number of fine shavings, which they left attached to it. These shavings, standing out from the shaft, acted as steadiers for the arrow's flight.

In the distal end of the arrowshaft a notch was cut in which the arrowhead was set, held in place with glue, and then at once wrapped with wet sinew, which soon dried. The points of the arrows were of chipped or ground stone, bone, deer antler, or the sole of the hoof of the buffalo, cut off, pared down, and dried; and it is possible that other portions of the hoofs of various animals may have been used. As soon as the white man came, metal began to take the place of many of these piercing materials. For a long time, however, metal was hard to get, while the demand for arrows was constant, and the old methods were still used.

KNIVES

The Cheyennes in ancient times used to a considerable extent arrowheads and knives of stone. Black Moccasin, who died about 1884, remembered when such implements were still often employed. Persons recently living were told by their grandfathers that in their time, say early in the nineteenth century, such implements were in use. Some knives were made of the ribs of elk or moose.

For their cutting and piercing implements they employed the hardest stones they could secure, usually flint. When a suitable stone had been found for making a celt, it was broken off to the right length by a sharp blow of a small stone hammer; it was then held in the left hand and rested on a block of wood, and repeated blows were given it with the hammer, it being turned and chipped by these blows until the desired edge and point were produced. When a knife—or an arrowpoint—had been worked down quite thin, but had not yet received a satisfactory cut-

ting edge, the piece was held in the left hand, between the thumb and forefinger, while a small stone punch was held between the fore and middle fingers. The punch was pressed against the edge of the blade, and was struck sharp downward blows with a hammer, each blow taking off a small flake, and this process was continued until the edge was finished. A better cutting edge was finally given by the flaking off of small chips from near the margin. The flint was held in the palm protected by a wad of hair or piece of tanned hide and a small point of antler or bone suddenly applied with force against the stone at the required point. This pressure cracked off a small chip and the operation was repeated as needed. The back of a completed knife was sometimes inserted in a split stick which served as a handle. The stick was tightly lashed with wet sinew or fine rawhide strings, and when these dried, the stone edge and its handle were firmly bound together. Such knives served efficiently for slitting killed game up the belly and legs.



Beaded knife sheath, Cheyenne, c. 1860

THE LANCE

The Lance was a favorite weapon. The ordinary type was a wooden shaft, six to seven feet long, armed, in modern times, with an iron or steel point. This might be of any shape—the blade of a sabre or a knife, an old bayonet, or some other piece of iron. In ancient times the lance-head was of chipped stone, often leaf-shaped. This head was bound to the shaft with sinew or rawhide thongs. Lances were used in war and in the chase of the buffalo.

There were several types of ceremonial lances, most of them belonging to the soldier bands. These were used in the dances of the various societies; and were also carried in war, but as ceremonial rather than lethal weapons—chiefly for the purpose of touching the enemy. One of these lances was called *hōbksim*, a word commonly translated “wheel,” but perhaps having reference to the bent or curving shape. At the distal end, the shaft of this form of lance is bent somewhat in the shape of the conventional shepherd’s crook. The shaft was commonly bound with otter-fur, and variously ornamented with feathers. Other types of lance, belonging to other soldier bands, were straight throughout, and the shaft was covered by a case made of deerskin—latterly of red or blue cloth—from which the feathers of eagles or turkeys or of hawks depended. The so-called “contrary lance,” is described elsewhere.³

THE SHIELD

The Shield was perhaps the most important part of the equipment of the Cheyenne warrior. This was a circular piece of dried and toughened bull-hide, carried on the left arm, light, but strong enough to stop an arrow, or to turn a ball from an old-fashioned smoothbore gun. Originally carried in order to ward off missiles and spear thrusts, the shield in later times exercised a protection that was in part physical and in part spiritual; indeed, most shields were believed to possess strong spiritual power. It might exercise in behalf of him who carried it not only the general protective influence due to its sacred character, but also might endue him with those qualities attributed to the heavenly bodies, birds, mammals, and other living creatures whose images were painted on it, or por-

tions of which were tied to it. It might afford also protection from the elements, for some shields were sacred to the thunder and to the lightning.



Model of a Cheyenne shield

A shield adorned with the feathers of the eagle was believed to give its owner the swiftness and courage of that bird. If the feathers of the owl were tied on it, the man perhaps shared the owl’s power to see in the dark, and to move silently and unnoticed. The figure of a bear painted on the shield, or its claws attached, gave him the bear’s toughness; and so of many of the qualities which belonged to the animals which the Cheyennes regarded as possessing superhuman powers.

Not everyone possessed a shield. For the greater part, they were owned only by men of years and discretion. Boys and very young men seldom carried them, unless some older friend or relative lent or gave his shield for this purpose. When this was done, the borrower was carefully instructed by the owner as to

³ See pp. 167-170.

the spiritual power of the shield, and the ceremonies to be practiced in using it. A young man who carried a shield, and who failed to perform the ceremonies appropriate to it, would certainly be wounded in the fight in which he bore it.

There seem to have been three kinds of shields known to the Cheyennes. Of these the most important were the group shields, said to have belonged to certain groups or divisions, and perhaps never going out of them. To another class belonged the dream shields, the fashion and painting of which had been taught to some man by a dream. These shields, though made in much the same way, and with a ceremony not less elaborate, possessed less protective power than the group shields.⁴ Finally, we are told of shields without spiritual protective power; they were commonly unpainted, and were used merely to ward off the arrows or blows of the enemy—were thus literally *parfleches*.

The group and the dream shields were made with elaborate ceremony, and various ceremonial acts were practiced in their use. In addition, they were hedged about by various duties and taboos, which made the ownership of such a shield a matter of much responsibility. So seriously did the duties and restrictions weigh on some shield owners that occasionally a man might determine to free himself from these responsibilities by giving up his shield, and might present it to the sun or to some other power, taking it out of the camp and leaving it hung on a pole on the top of a hill. Or, he might take it down to the river, where, tying stones to it, he deposited it with some ceremony in the stream. A shield thus relinquished by its owner was never disturbed; no one would dare touch it, knowing that if he did so bad luck would surely follow.

In the more recent wars with United States troops, the Cheyennes at length came to realize that the shield afforded little physical protection against the balls from modern rifles, but they did not lose faith in its spiritual assistance, and carried shields until the fighting ceased. At present, however, old-time shields are no longer found among the Cheyennes. Many have been sacrificed or abandoned, some have

been buried with their owners, or with the dead children of their owners, while a few have been lost or given to white men; so that, as far as I can learn, there does not now remain a single shield in either section of the tribe.

Shield Construction

Constructed on the same general principle as that of other Plains tribes, the Cheyenne shield has some characteristics of its own. It was made from the shrunken rawhide of the buffalo-bull's neck, but if a deerskin cover was used over the bull's hide, the Cheyennes often stuffed the space between the shield and its covering with feathers, or with buffalo or antelope hair, thus deadening the force of arrow or bullet, and increasing the protection it gave.

When a shield was to be made, a circular hole was dug in the ground, a foot or more deep, and a little wider than the intended diameter of the shield. A fire was built near this hole, in which stones were heated red-hot. About half the fresh skin of a buffalo-bull—the front part of the hide—was spread over the hole, and pinned down all around, to hold it in place for a time. At one side near the fire there were no pins, and a place was left where the hide could be raised.

When the stones in the fire were hot, the edge of the hide was lifted and a number of these stones were placed in the hole. Water was poured on them, and the skin was clapped down on the ground and held there. The hot steam rising from the hole contracted and thickened the skin on all sides. Sometimes a single steaming was enough to bring the hide to the proper thickness, or again a second treatment was needed; in any event, the hide was kept over the steam until it had become as thick as possible. While the hide was being shrunk from beneath, hot water was poured on the hair side from above, and a man with a knife or scraper removed the hair.

When the steaming had been completed, the hide was taken off the hole, and with an awl a small hole was made as near the middle of it as possible, and a strand of sinew passed through the hole. By this string it was held up, and from this as a center one-half the intended diameter of the shield was measured off on all sides, the circle was marked all around, and the hide cut off, so that it was a perfect circle of the size required. A *parfleche* was now spread on the ground to keep the shield from the dirt, and placing it on the *parfleche* it was pounded with a stone to efface all

⁴There have been cases where men have devised a new painting for a shield, pretending to have dreamed of the painting. Such shields, however, have often proved ineffectual, and the men carrying them have been killed by balls or arrows which pierced the shields.

the wrinkles and to make it smooth. It was then put out to dry. The holes through which the strings for the armhold—or for any of the attachments—were to pass, were afterward burned in the hide with a heated iron rod or wire.

Shield Coverings and Painting

A well-dressed antelope-skin was chosen to make a cover for the shield, and on this cover were to be painted the birds, animals, or symbols, which the



Top: Shield and painted cover, Cheyenne, c. 1860
Bottom: Painted shield, Cheyenne, c. 1870

shield-maker selected. When this painting was to be done, the shield-maker called into the lodge a number of men to sing with him. All the singers were brave men, warriors; all wore feathers on their heads, sometimes the complete stuffed skins of different hawks tied to their scalp-locks, and perhaps a lock of hair cut from the scalp of an enemy. The lodge door was shut, and a stick was put up to warn people not to enter. The paint used for the shield cover was mixed with glue made from scrapings of buffalo-hide. This made a durable paint, which did not rub or wear off.

Before the painting was begun, the shield and its cover were placed at the back of the lodge, resting on a bed of the stems of white sage, which kept the shield from touching the ground. Between the fire and this bed of sage four small sticks were thrust into the ground, forming the corners of a small square, in the middle of which a coal from the fire was put on the ground. Dried sweet grass was sprinkled on the coal, and the shield-maker held his hands over the smoke and then made the ceremonial motions.⁵ The pipe was filled, lighted, and passed around the circle. When it had been smoked out, the ashes were emptied from it, and it was filled again and placed on the ground between the four sticks and the shield. Then followed a song, and the man who was making the shield painted for a short time. Again the pipe was lighted and smoked out, another song was sung, and the shield-maker painted again. They smoked four times and sang four times, all the songs being different. Then they rested and talked for a time, again smoked and sang as before, and so it went on until the painting was finished.

After the painting was finished, the cover was rested on the shield, and to the cover were attached the feathers of the different war birds that were to go on the shield. Then the painted cover was fitted on the shield, the feathers properly arranged and over all was put a plain deerskin covering. To the outside cover, all around the border of the shield, were now attached fine feathers; sometimes only a few, sometimes many. An arm-hold of otter-skin, by which to carry it, was attached to the back of the shield. After all these things had been done, the singers rubbed white clay all over their bodies, and over the feathers and skins of the birds which were on their heads. Often the painting was done directly on the bull's-hide shield,

⁵ See footnote 3, p. 156.

to which also the protective medicines and decorations were attached.

While all this had been going on, the female relations of these men had been cooking food, and when the ceremony was over, this was brought to the front of the lodge, passed in to the singers, and they ate. After this the shield was taken close to the door, and people—men, women, and children—were called into the lodge. They passed by the shield and put their hands on it, just touching it with one hand. In front of the lodge, and not more than twenty-five feet distant, a sweat-lodge had been built. The shield was now taken out and placed on top of this sweat-lodge, and the singers and painter all entered it and sang, while taking a sweat. After they had finished, they came out, still singing, but as each one passed out the door, he stopped singing. The ceremony was now concluded.

A tripod had already been set up behind the lodge, and the owner hung the shield on it, where it remained until he was ready to go to war.

Spiritual Power of Shields

A shield had very strong power. No one might handle it without the owner's permission. The shield songs were particularly sacred; they were connected with the thunder and the lightning, and could be sung only at special times, and by special men.

The old men who made shields possessed some special spiritual power: had perhaps been helped by a bird or turtle, or a buffalo-bull, or by some spirit. They had been taught by older shield-makers how the work should be done. A man who wished to have a shield made, asked a shield-maker to help him—i.e., to make a shield for him—by offering him a filled pipe; and the shield-maker, by smoking, consented to grant the request. One for whom a shield had been made, having been taught the secrets and the ceremonies, might himself become a shield-maker. If the man for whom it had been made captured a horse on his first war journey after receiving the shield, he was expected to present the horse to the shield-maker. Each maker made all his shields alike, and painted them in the same way.

The shield was indeed a powerful helper, and every adornment it bore possessed a distinct significance. Thus, Red Bird's shield, now in my possession, had on it four claws of a grizzly bear in two pairs, a turtle's tail, a round leaden ball, and the feathers of eagles and

owls. The bear has great strength and courage, and is hard to kill; therefore, the man who carried the shield would have strength, courage, and likewise be hard to kill. The turtle possesses much spiritual power, and also is hard to kill. If you cut off its head, it will still move, and perhaps even walk away. So the man who carried this shield, even if badly wounded, would be likely to recover. Moreover, the turtle knows how to hide; it can dive to the bottom of the water and stay there concealed for a long time. The leaden ball would turn aside the bullets of the enemy. The feathers of the birds gave to the man who carried the shield the powers possessed by those birds.

This shield is painted red, with a crescent moon on it. It was the last shield in the Northern Cheyenne tribe. One of the bear's claws is missing; it was shot away in a fight with the Crows, on an occasion when Big Head was carrying the shield.

This shield was made by Oak (*Öümsb'*), who gave it to his son Oak, who was the father of Great Eyes. The younger Oak carried it to war as a young man—before he was married. He gave it to Great Eyes, who at the age of sixty was killed at Fort Robinson, Nebraska, in January, 1879. Two Moon believed that the shield was made about 1780, and so is more than a hundred and forty years old. When the outbreak at Fort Robinson was about to take place, Great Eyes gave the shield to his nephew, Red Bird, then only a boy. In the rush from the barracks, Red Bird was shot in the knee, but managed to crawl into a hole, and there tied up his leg, cut two forked sticks for crutches, and many days later hobbled into the house of John Shettler, a mile and a half below the post. During all his difficulty and suffering, for he had almost nothing to eat all this time, he did not abandon his shield, but still had it on his back when he came to the house. He was afterward sent to Pine Ridge. Red Bird was sound and whole in 1895, but has since died. This shield is said to belong to the Mahsikhkota group.

Each tribal group had its own method of treating the shields before its warriors went to battle. The hill men, *Hissiometaniu*, before charging, used to run their horses over the prairie, stoop down to the left and sweep the shield over the grass; then raise it above the head, hold it toward the sun, and shake it. Unless this were done they were likely to be wounded.

Ivistsinipah burned sweet grass, sage, and other medicine, which was always carried tied to the shield. They passed the shield four times through this smoke,

and then held it up to the sun and shook it, and afterward moved it down toward the body four times, putting it on the arm the fourth time.

Various Taboos Regarding Shields

Various taboos were connected with the different shields. Men who owned certain shields were not permitted to eat entrails; others were not permitted to take food from the fire with a metal implement—could not do this with knife or fork, but must use a sharp stick. Some might not eat the heart of any animal, nor anything from the kettle in which the heart had been cooked. Others might not eat of the neck, nor others of the ham of the buffalo. To some the placenta of the buffalo was forbidden. If by accident a man entered a lodge in which was a menstruating woman, he must at once purify himself by taking a sweat. Shield-makers always warned the men for whom they were making shields that if they did not carefully observe the ceremonies connected with the shields they would be hit in battle by bullets or arrows. If the shield fell to the ground, it was not permitted at once to pick it up. It must be covered by a skin or a blanket, and allowed to lie on the ground for a time. When taken up, some of the “medicine”—pulverized leaves—from the bundle tied to the shield was sprinkled on a coal, and the shield passed through the smoke. After this, it was hung on the tripod as before.

Mythic Origins of the Shield

Somewhere near the Black Hills, east and north, is a butte or mountain—believed to be Bear Butte⁶—which is called Medicine Lodge. Some people say that the first shields came from there. It was long ago that a man went up on this butte to remain there for four days without food or drink. After he had been there two days a person came to him and said, “Come down and go into this hill with me.” The young man arose and followed the person, who went part way down the butte and then went into it. The man found himself in a lodge, and about it he saw hanging many different shields. An old man—the chief man of the lodge—gave the young man seven differently painted shields.

⁶ *Nāvī vō ōs*, Teaching Hill, i.e., hill where people are taught.

When the young man returned to his home, he brought with him these shields, and soon afterward he began to make other shields like those he had seen in the lodge, as the old man had directed and taught him. Shields, therefore, would seem to be closely related to the medicine lodge.

The man who brought these shields told his people that they must make their shields like them; so thenceforth all the tribal groups had shields which were always the same. Other shields were dreamed of by people who suffered on the hills.



Red Bird's shield



DOCTORS AND HEALING

NO one knows how disease first came into the world nor always what causes it. Often it is believed to come from invisible arrows, shot into the person by various hostile agencies. Certain spirits, or personalities, which inhabit springs, may shoot such arrows at people who visit the springs. These arrows remain in the person and cause sickness. If they are not removed, the person dies. One who carelessly jumps across a spring, or across the water near its source, may be shot with such an arrow. These spirits must be propitiated, and gifts made to them. Such offerings are often seen lying on the ground about springs. Where doctors cure such sick people by taking out the cause of the disease, this cause sometimes appears as a small stone. These spirits are called Ground People: *Ho ho' ta ma itsi hyo' ist*—"live in the ground." They are particularly active at night. If offended, the supernatural powers, *maiyun*, which often dwell in peculiar-looking bluffs, or hills, or peaks, may cause sickness. They are not necessarily malignant, and may be made favorable by prayers and sacrifices, or if neglected or ill-treated, may be rendered ill-disposed, and may cause sickness or even death.

About the year 1890, Sun's Road built a cabin on Muddy Creek, and soon after moving into it, became sick, and for a long time was in bad health. Nothing seemed to help him, though the tribal doctors and the agency physician did what they could. At length, however, he discovered the cause of his illness. In the hills on the north side of the Muddy, standing out a little from the higher bluffs, is a peculiar conical peak, odd in shape and color, and on the south side of the stream is another odd-looking peak. Sun's Road's house was in the line between these two peaks, and thus was on the trail traveled by the spirits dwelling in them, when they went from one peak to the other to visit. Since the doors at the front and back of the house faced up and down the stream, it appeared evident that when the spirits passed to and fro they could not pass through the house, but were obliged to climb over it. This obstruction in their trail annoyed

them, and to punish Sun's Road for troubling them, they made him ill.

When Sun's Road awoke to the situation, he at once moved his house out of the line between the hills, and also turned it half round so that if they wished, the spirits might pass through the house, instead of climbing over it, if it still stood in their way. He became better at once, and in a short time recovered his health. Sun's Road often expressed astonishment that he could have been so careless as to build his house



Sun's Road

in such a situation, and so to have subjected himself to danger.

Since disease is believed to arise from supernatural as well as from natural causes, the work of healing is a mingling of natural and supernatural remedies. Many people—men and women alike—have the power to heal sickness. They do this by administering

roots and herbs, or by the exercise of spiritual power, often employing both methods on the same person, either in succession, or both at the same time. The priests or doctors give medicines and pray to friendly spirits, asking them to cause the patient to recover, and as they seek the aid of those who are favorable, they also by threats and alarming manifestations try to frighten away the evil influences which afflict the patient.

BECOMING A DOCTOR

When a man is to become a doctor, after he has thought and prayed much about it, some power—perhaps *Heammawibio*—comes to him, or sends to him a messenger in sleep, to teach him what he shall do in doctoring, and what herbs and roots—which the messenger describes—he must search for in the hills. The messenger usually takes the form of a person, but may appear as an animal.

A young man who wishes to become a doctor and to obtain the special power possessed by some doctor in the tribe, may go to that man and offer him the pipe, begging for the special power desired. The doctor may be reluctant to give this power to the seeker, yet even so may accede to the request.

A man cannot become a doctor by himself; when he receives power, his wife—who afterward is his assistant—must also be taught and receive certain secrets. The doctor who imparts powers and secrets to another receives a property consideration therefore—horses, saddles, clothing, robes, or arms. If the wife of the man who is receiving the power does not wish to become a doctor, the man must find another woman to act with him. A man may become a doctor through a dream, thus receiving spiritual power directly from above, but even in this case he must have a woman to help him. Even though he receive his power through a dream, he must still go to another doctor to be taught certain things. The doctor who gives power to a young man does not part with his own power, nor abandon his office as a doctor; he still practices healing as before.

Among other things, the instructor indicates to the novice what roots for healing he shall gather; but the novice may dig only four roots in one day—either four roots of different plants or four of the same kind of plant. These medicines the older man prepares for use, and tells the novice their properties and how they shall be employed. Of the medicines brought in by

the novice, the doctor retains a part for himself. Thus, if he gives instructions to many persons, he is never obliged to collect medicines for himself.

As the medicine seeker knows what kind of healing power he desires, he offers the pipe to a doctor who possesses the medicine that he wants. If friends or relations contribute to assist the medicine seeker to pay the man whose medicine he receives, the contributors will be repaid if and when the medicine seeker in his turn is paid for giving his medicine to another.

DOCTORING CEREMONY

The doctoring of human beings was elaborate and full of ceremony. If a person was sick, and his relations desired treatment for him by a doctor, one of them, or a messenger, went to this doctor, carrying a filled pipe, and entered the lodge and sat down. He placed the pipe on the ground, with the stem directed toward the doctor, and pushed it toward him, at the same time saying, "I wish you to come and doctor my child." If the doctor was unwilling to act, which was unusual, he declined to accept the pipe. If willing to go, however, he held the palms of his hands toward the sky, and then placing them on the ground, took up the pipe with both hands, and holding it in his left hand, again held the right palm upward; then placed it on the ground, and finally rubbed the hand over the pipestem, from left to right, away from the bowl. Then he lighted the pipe and smoked—thereby consenting—and after the pipe was smoked out, accompanied the petitioner to his lodge.

Before the doctor treated a patient, he purified himself and the sick man. The word *māt to' ho wāt* means to burn the leaves of sweet pine (or sweet grass, the needles of the group juniper, dried and pulverized mushroom or toadstool, or powdered bitterroot) on a live coal. A coal was taken from the fire, and the herb was sprinkled on it.¹ As the smoke and fumes rose, the doctor held his hands over the smoke, so as to receive on the palms the heat and the odor. He then pressed the palms of his hands on the affected part of the patient's body. This process of purification was

¹ The burning of fragrant herbs—such as sweet grass, sweet pine—is done in order to set free certain wholesome plant influences which have a medicinal as well as a purifying effect on whatever is held in the smoke which rises. These helpful influences are from the sun, which has caused these plants to grow.

preliminary to the ordinary treatment for any kind of illness.

While treating a sick person in a lodge the doctor held in his hand a rattle, and sang, shaking the rattle in rhythm with the song. The song was an invocation or prayer, while the rattle was used to drive away the bad spirit which caused the sickness. At intervals the doctor stopped singing, and prayed in a few words. Sometimes he stood up and walked about the lodge, singing and rattling, in order to expel the bad spirits from every part of the dwelling. Throughout the active treatment of the patient the praying and laying on of hands continued. The hands were frequently passed through the smoke, the palms held up to the sun, and then rubbed on the ground, and afterward placed on the patient, while prayers were made to the Great Power, asking that he would help to cure this sick person.²

The rattles used by the doctors were usually made of buffalo-skin, and filled with little stones. Some doctors used rattles made of gourds, especially when treating wounds where blood had been shed; and no doubt in old times, when agriculture was more a part of the tribal life than recently, such rattles were more common. When a person was sick, it was thought that the cause of the disease existed in a certain place in the body. Over this place the doctor shook the rattle, to drive out the evil influence, and then with the mouth strove to suck out the cause of the disease. He appeared to draw out from the patient's body buffalo-hair, stones, and even lizards, which were thought to be the cause of the sickness. When the cause was removed, the patient would recover. Different doctors had different methods. In addition to the rattle, some used the wing of a hawk or an eagle, to fan and cool the sick person. Some used a whole bird of some kind.

Porcupine, a famous doctor and once the leader of the "ghost dance" cult in the North, explained to me his method of using the rattle long employed in his doctoring, and told how he healed the sick:

A braid of sweet grass was always tied to the handle of the rattle, and of this sweet grass a little was burned on a coal, and the rattle passed through the smoke to purify it. A small piece of a medicine root was bitten off and chewed, and spat or blown on the hands

² Some doctors have names for the cardinal points—to be addressed in prayer—which differ from those in common use.



Porcupine

in the ceremonial way, and the ceremonial motions made.³ As the rattling began, three songs were sung. If the patient was very weak, dull, and sleepy, and the doctor wished to rouse him, he struck the ground four times with the rattle. When the three songs had been sung, the doctoring stopped for a time, and a pipe was smoked. After it had been smoked out, sweet grass was again burned on a coal, and the pipe, having been cleaned, was filled and placed on the ground before the doctor, the stem pointing toward the door and the bowl to the back of the lodge. The doctor now gave medicine to the patient.

³ See footnote 3, p. 156.

Now five different songs were sung, one after another, and without intermissions. Sweet grass was burned again, and the patient treated further, the afflicted part being sucked, or, as the Cheyennes call it, "bitten." Then a tea was administered—a warm drink suited to the disease. The doctor bit off a piece of the medicine root, chewed it, and spat it on various parts of the patient's body, which were now cooled by patting and fanning with an eagle's wing. Then the pipe was smoked again, and after it had been smoked out was again filled and placed as before. The rattle was now taken up, another pinch of sweet grass burned, the rattle passed through the smoke, and seven different songs were sung, again without intermissions. At the conclusion of the singing, the pipe was smoked before the doctoring was continued. The doctor now mixed medicine with deer fat and rubbed the mixture on his hands, and held them over the fire until they were warm, when the hands were placed on the part of the body where the pain was felt. If the pain was in the body, both hands were placed over it; if in the head, first one hand was pressed on the head and then the other.

Before singing again, the rattle was once more held over the smoke of burning sweet grass. Then nine different songs were sung, without interval, and before the nine songs were finished the patient had begun to sleep. After the nine songs were sung, the doctor, grasping the pipe in his right hand, held it up to the south, west, north, and east to the sky and to the ground. The pipe was then changed to the left hand, and they smoked. This ended the doctoring.

Food was now brought in and from it five little pieces of meat were cut or pulled off and put ceremonially on the doctor's right palm. He put his left hand on top of them, and turning over the hands transferred the pieces of meat to the left hand. Then he went out the door and to the south of the lodge, and standing, back to the lodge, took one piece of the meat in his right hand, held it to the south, and then placed it on the ground at the edge of the lodge. At the west, north, and east of the lodge he did the same, and then entering, he held the fifth piece to the sky, and put it on the ground at the edge of the fire nearest the door. This is the usual offering—*nivostanivo*. Then he returned to his place, and they ate.

Of the food offered to those in the lodge, enough was served to each man so that he could take some of it, even if only a mouthful, to his home, that each member of the family might taste thereof. The cer-

emonies performed had in a sense consecrated the food.

SWEAT-LODGE

The sweat-lodge—the vapor bath—was used in medical treatment as in religious ceremonies. The sweat-lodge was made, in the usual way, of willow shoots, of any number, according to the view of the man who made it. The number was seldom fewer than twelve, and might be much greater. Sixteen was a common number—six each at the sides and two each at the ends. The shoots were generally from six to eight feet in length, and the lodge was from three to four feet in height. Any number of people, from one to eight, ten, or twelve, or as many as the lodge would hold, might take the sweat together. The doctor or medicine man went in with the patients. Women might take the bath as well as men. Stones were heated in a fire outside the sweat-house, passed in by a woman, who handled them with two forked sticks, and placed in a shallow rectangular hole dug in the center of the lodge. Water was then sprinkled on them from the mouth or by means of a brush made of a buffalo-beard, creating dense steam and heat, which were confined by a covering of skins or canvas or blankets spread over the framework. While the sweat was being taken, the doctor prayed, sang, and used his rattle. After the sweat a plunge in the river followed.⁴

While the mysterious significance of the sweat-lodge is hidden from most of us, we may feel sure that almost everything connected with its use has a meaning. Left Hand Bull gave interesting hints on the symbolism of some of these matters. It is believed that the sun, shining for many years on the wood which is used in the fire to heat the stones for the sweat-lodge, has imparted to that wood much of its power and life. The fire as it heats the stones, transmits to them the sun's power which has been stored up in the wood. When these hot stones are brought into the sweat-lodge and water is sprinkled on them, the vapor given off from the hot stones carries with it this sun power which envelops and is inhaled by those who sit in the sweat-lodge. The vapor thus reaches every part of the individual, within and without. It is even felt that the fire in which the stones are heated represents the sun as a center of heat. The skull of the

⁴ Editor's Note: See also "Spiritual Preparations," pp. 144-145.



Sweat-lodge with buffalo skull, sage, and forked sticks

buffalo bull that is placed in front of the lodge represents food and also generative power, and the path from it into the sweat-lodge, and the path through the fire into the sweat-lodge, all symbolize the life-producing power of the sun.

HERBAL REMEDIES

Added to the spiritual side of healing—that is, exorcising or frightening away of the spirits or evil influences which cause disease—was, and still is to some extent, the practice of medicine by administering remedies. For the greater part these remedies were herbs, many of which unquestionably were more or less efficacious, and in not a few cases the Indians appear to have some practical ideas of the medicinal properties of certain plants.⁵ Healing by the administering of herbs was practiced by men and women alike. Almost

every old woman had a bundle of medicines peculiarly her own, the secrets of which were known only to her. These were usually carried about in a little buffalo-skin sack, often one of those so commonly used for carrying the stakes for gambling, or for sewing materials. To each little bundle was usually tied some mark of identification, so that the owner might readily recognize it. Thus, to one bundle might be tied a blue bead, to another a white one, to a third the claw of a badger, to a fourth a part of the beard of a turkey. Sometimes these articles, which at first were attached to the bundles solely to identify them, came at length to pose a sacred character and to have a close connection with the healing power of the medicine; so that in some cases it was a part of the administration of the remedy to stir (before the patient drank it) the water in which the medicine had been mixed, with the claw of the animal, or with the beard of the turkey, or perhaps with the little stone arrowhead which was tied to the bundle.

Tied to the necklet or to the shoulder-girdle, or perhaps to the hair, most men carried about with them one or more little bundles of medicines, some spiritual,—i.e., effective by their mysterious power,—

⁵ In administering plant medicines, two methods are commonly used. Either an infusion is made, to be taken internally or used as a lotion; or occasionally poultices of the pulverized plant wet with cold water are applied and renewed as frequently as may be.



Unknown Cheyenne doctor

others with curative properties. Some men had vegetable medicines of which they alone possessed the secrets: these might be what we might term drugs, or they might be merely *maiyu*—might possess spiritual power. The old stories tell us that people learned of the various medicinal plants, and of the uses to which they were to be put, by means of dreams, or that certain mythological heroes went out with them on the prairie and pointed out various plants to be used for treating diseases.

Red Eagle, born about 1810, was a noted doctor. His drinking vessel could be only of wood, horn, shell, or pottery, not of metal. This instruction was given him in a dream. He owned a shallow wooden cup or small bowl about eight inches in diameter, with five incised figures of water animals on the inside, and pierced near the margin for attachment of a string. It was made long ago by his mother's mother, for Red Eagle's uncle, and was finally given to Red Eagle. Such cups were formerly carried on war journeys for

use as drinking vessels, but of late years this one had been used by Red Eagle in administering medicine to the sick. The figures cut in the cup are those after animals, because the cup was intended to be used for fluids, and water animals have much power as to water. The figures are frog, fish, turtle, otter, and, on the bottom, a siredon or mud-puppy. When the doctor put medicine in the cup, he dropped it in over each one of the four animals, in the four directions. The cup stood on the ground in front of the doctor, the turtle pointing north, the otter east, the frog south, and the fish west. The doctor put in a pinch of medicine each over the turtle, the otter, the frog, and the fish, in that order, and then one over the siredon in the middle. The patient took a sip from the cup opposite the head of each animal, in the same order which the medicine was put in. The dish was then turned completely around to the left four times, and when the fourth turn was completed the patient took the cup and drank all the medicine.

MEDICINE PIPES

A long time ago the Cheyennes had ceremonial stone pipes which possessed special power and which on occasions were used in treating the sick. The bowls of these were straight, not bent at a right angle like the modern stone pipes. One or two such pipes still exist, and are used in some important ceremonies—those of the Medicine Lodge and the *Massaum*. The stems of some of these pipes are said to have been ornamented, wrapped with skins, painted, and with pendent feathers. Other stems were perfectly plain, without ornament or painting. It is not known how these pipes were first received, but a story is told of how the first one came:

It is said that a long time ago an old doctor met a person who had come out of a cave in a big hill. This person advised the doctor to go to the top of the hill, and to remain there four days and four nights, saying that at the end of this time he would again come and see him. The doctor did as advised. After four days the person came to him, and said, "Come with me; we will go in." They went down from the hill and entered the cave, and there the person taught the doctor how to make a medicine pipe, and what to do with it; four days must be occupied in making and finishing the pipe, and the doctoring with it must occupy four days. Then the doctor came out of the cave and returned to his village. He is thought to be the first man who made one of these pipes.

These pipes were given only to men who possessed spiritual power for healing. Such an one sometimes made a feast, and calling in many of the old men and chiefs, told them that he needed a medicine pipe. The chief men and the doctors of the village were called together, and a great feast was made. To the lodge where these people were assembled a number of horses were sent by the doctor who had asked to have the pipe made, and tied before it. After all had eaten, those present discussed the matter, and perhaps it was decided that the pipe should be made and given to this doctor.

After the pipe had been made, and it was first shown to the old men, they looked at it very carefully, for they were men who knew how a medicine pipe should be made. Perhaps one or another suggested that it should be changed a little, that it ought to have some different painting, or to be ornamented with other feathers. After it had been finally approved, another man might caution those who were handling it,

saying: "Be careful how you handle it. Do not move it too quickly."⁶ When all the changes had been made, and the pipe was finished, they all sang. Then the pipe was presented.

When they had given this pipe to the doctor, it was wrapped up and put away as sacred, and was used only on certain special occasions. But if anyone in the camp became sick, he might send word to this doctor that he wished him to bring his medicine pipe to him, that he wished to smoke. The doctor unwrapped the pipe at home, filled it there, took it to the man's lodge, and entered. If, in filling the pipe, which sometimes was done by another than the doctor, the finger touched it, this would cause death. Even he who owned and carried it, when he took it from its wrappings, had spread on the ground before him white sage stems, to keep the pipe from the ground. On this sage rested a piece of buffalo-chip, on which the bowl of the pipe was supported. When the owner was about to fill it, he did not touch the pipe with the naked hand, but took a handful of sage, which he held in his hand between his thumb and fingers and the bowl of the pipe. When he filled the pipe, he put in seven pinches of tobacco: one for each of the four points, one for the rising sun, one for the setting sun, and one for the sky. When it had been done in that way, they might smoke. No one but the doctor who owned it might handle the pipe bowl.

When the doctor reached the sick man's lodge, the pipe was lighted, and pointed to the sky and to the earth. Then the doctor held the stem, and let the sick man smoke; but before he might smoke, white sage was laid all over the floor of the lodge. All day long the doctor remained with the sick man, and during all the day he drank no water. The next morning they had a feast, at which all the men concerned in the giving of the pipe were present. Not every sick person smoked one of these pipes; only those who asked to do so. Those who did not smoke were doctored, and the doctor smoked, holding the pipe over them.

⁶ The stem of a medicine pipe, as it was passed along, might be held by anyone, but no one might touch the bowl. When the smoking was finished, the doctor placed the pipe on the ground. It was necessary that this should be done very slowly and carefully, and his hand drawn away from the pipe without haste. When he lifted it up, the same slow motions must be used. If he moved his hand quickly, this would cause a storm or a high wind. In cleaning out the pipe he must be slow, careful, and touch it lightly.

A doctor might not sell one of these pipes. If he did so he lost his power.

Now the first person who had one of these pipes had been told that he must occupy four days in doctoring with it, and for a long time all who had these pipes obeyed this instruction. Ultimately, however, the people grew careless, and began to employ only three days in doctoring, and then two days, and sometimes only one day. So the power to heal with these pipes was lost, and at last they were given up; hence for a long time there have been none in the tribe. Even the memory of them has almost passed away.

SURGERY

The Cheyennes never practiced amputation. No man was willing to lose arm or leg or finger, nor would any doctor take the responsibility of cutting off a limb. Yet more or less cutting was occasionally required to remove an arrow-head.

Broken legs were often set, and made excellent unions, so that no evidence of the injury remained. On the other hand, sometimes when a leg was set, if the wounded man was obliged to ride a horse, or to be jolted in a travois, during flight from a pursuing enemy, a vicious union of the bone resulted and the man was perhaps a cripple for life. Under favorable circumstances, however, astonishing cures were sometimes made.

There was recently at Pine Ridge a man who in the winter of 1876 was shot in the leg, the ball entering at the shin, and coming out halfway between the knee and the thigh, smashing the knee and shattering the bones above and below it. He was taken to the hospital at Camp Robinson, where the doctor said the leg must come off if the man's life was to be saved. The Indian declined to consent to this, and was taken away. An Indian doctor took charge of and cured him, so that he walked on the leg, though it was stiff.

FEES

The Cheyenne doctors did not usually set a price for their services; they did not take advantage of a man's necessities. When they first entered the lodge they were told what would be given them—it might be a horse or a blanket and they doctored the patient, taking what was offered.

In old times doctors were paid with property of any sort, as blankets, arrows, robes, saddles, or horses;

but in recent years they have sometimes been paid in money. As long ago as the year 1900, Tall Meat, a doctor, received five dollars each for doctoring two patients. One was a man who, from a description of his symptoms, seems to have had dropsy, and whom Tall Meat frankly said he could not cure. The other was a woman.

BLACK MAGIC

The mysterious powers possessed by some medicine men were believed to make it possible for them to kill persons by blowing on them, or to afflict them with disease or death. Such power, however, might react on the one who exercised it, and he often took steps to protect himself against the agency that he himself had set in motion.

One who had dreamed that he possessed a certain power might determine to make trial of this power on another by merely exercising his will. His motive might be jealousy or anger or mere curiosity—to see if he could really do this. Perhaps he took some medicine or some small object, even a hair from his robe, and rolled it into a little ball and held it up toward the sun, and wishing something bad for him, threw it toward the person. The object disappeared and went to the one about whom he was thinking. The man need not be near the person he was thinking of, yet he had the power to harm him.⁷ A man who had done this knew that he had done wrong, hence to make atonement and to protect himself from evil consequences he might go into the sweat-house and have two strips of skin taken from his arms or from his breast. The little ball which he had sent away might cause illness to the one to whom it had gone, or might even cause his death. After a time the person to whom the ball was sent might perhaps, in a dream, see the one who had sent it, in the act of dispatching it. If a doctor who had been called in to heal the sick person succeeded in getting the ball out of his body, it might be sent back to the one who originally dispatched it. Unless the sender had sacrificed a part of his body, the returned missile might do him the same kind of harm.

If the man who had sent the ball had reason to think that it might be returned to him, he went to a hilltop at daylight in the morning and watched for the return of the ball, which, when it came back to

⁷ *Ē ehyó'm*, signifying, "he has power to harm at a distance."

the sender, wherever he might be, looked like a little spark of fire. If the sender had protected his head by rubbing a special medicine on it, he caught the spark in his hand and the medicine prevented the ball from entering his flesh. When he extinguished the spark, the power of the ball was gone. That ended it.

Men possessing strong spiritual power have been known to take a flicker's tail-feather, worn in the hair, and this, if sent into a person's body, caused lingering illness and death. He who performed such an act took one of the rectrices from the tail and darted it, quill forward, in the direction of the person he wished to injure, at the same time stamping the right foot on the ground and uttering a deep, low grunt. The feather or its power was believed to fly through the air and to enter the person's body. It did not kill at once, but acted slowly and surely, causing death unless the afflicted man suspected the cause of the trouble and through the aid of some power secured relief.

Crazy Mule, a famous medicine man, who died years ago in the South, stated that at one time he had the power to kill by looking at a person, and was obliged to use great caution to keep from injuring his friends; but before his death he relinquished this power.

EXHIBITIONS OF POWER

Often a doctor possessing great spiritual power might give exhibitions of it, either for his own glorification or to strengthen people's faith in him, or even for the entertainment of those present. These mysterious exhibitions were not uncommon in old times, but the power to perform them has now passed away. My old friend, Gentle Horse, who is no longer living, gave me the following account of the power of a relative: "My uncle, Bear On The Ridge, my mother's brother, was a great doctor. He had a skunk-hide and a badger-hide. He used to keep the skunk-hide where he kept his medicine; it was made up like a sack, and was an old hide, much worn, the hair all coming off. When he made medicine he often took that hide, holding it with one hand by the head, and with the other by the back, and threw it over by the door, and when it struck the ground the skunk was alive, with its hide fresh and clean. Then he took a robe and threw it over the skunk, and when he took the robe away, there was the old dead hide. He often did the same with the badger. It was alive and growling; then when he threw the robe over it, it became the dead hide again.

"When making the medicine he sometimes took a tin cup and partly filled it with water; he wet some earth, and modeled the mud into the shape of a turtle. He put the piece of mud in the cup, covered it, and went on making the medicine. Presently something was heard, a sound of scratching against tin, and when he took the cover from the cup, there was seen in it a living water-turtle trying to get out."

MEDICINE BUNDLES

The mysterious medicines which came to the doctor by the help of the spiritual powers were known only to him. They were kept carefully wrapped in a bundle or a pouch. The medicine sack of the doctor hung above the lodge owner's head, and so opposite the door, in stormy weather; but—as much as possible—it was felt it should be out of doors so that the sun might shine on it, and the wind blow over it, and it might be kept pure. It was often hung up over the door, tied against the lodge outside; or a lance was set in the ground in front of the door, or to the south of the lodge, and the medicine-bundle tied to it. The spiritual power of these medicines might be weakened, or even destroyed, if the laws regarding them were not observed. When the medicine was in the lodge, if wood was lying by the fire no one might knock against it, or knock or tap anything in the lodge. On entering, no one should pass in front of other persons; one should pass behind them to his place. All would lean forward. Children playing outside might not throw anything against the lodge. If any of these things took place—unless appropriate ceremonies were performed to overcome the evil effect—the power of the doctor's medicine was impaired—he would have bad luck, and could not cure anyone.

ACCOUNTS OF HEALINGS

A Sioux named Sitting Bull, who had long lived with the Northern Cheyennes and was called by them Short Sioux, while retreating in a running fight with the Crows, was shot in the back. The ball had gone through his body; blood was flowing from the wound in the back and in the breast, and from the man's mouth. After the Crows had left them, Sitting Bull said to those near him: "I must find an ant-hill. Look for one." When an ant-hill was found, Sitting Bull dismounted, collected a handful of ants, and put them in his mouth and swallowed them. "Now," he said, "I



Lodge with medicine bundle

shall be well.” He mounted and rode on all through the night, and at last recovered.

Many men had their own special medicine, which they used to doctor themselves when they became ill or were wounded. Bull Head, now dead, but a contemporary of Two Moon, and other recent men, doctored himself for rattlesnake bite by eating the flesh of the rattlesnake. Many years ago Bull Head was wounded by the Utes, the ball passing through the lower part of his side, making a wound that never healed. For this wound too he doctored himself by eating the flesh of the rattlesnake.

When Arapaho Chief was about twenty-eight years of age (say 1864), he was bitten by a rattlesnake at the Painted Rocks on Box Elder River, a tributary

of Powder River, Montana. This place is mysterious because there pictures appear on the rocks “without anyone having painted them.” It is a place where sacrifices are made, and at the time this happened many people had gone there to pray, but most of them had already gone home. Arapaho Chief was one of the last to go. He was near the middle part of the cliffs on which the pictures are, and threw up his hands toward the pictures and bent his head and prayed, asking that he might be helped, in his next fight, to count a coup and to capture some horses. The snake was at his feet, but he did not see it until just as it struck him. He felt no pain from the bite, but felt a glancing blow, as if the side of his leg had been struck. He went on and felt no inconvenience at all until he had waded the

stream. Then his leg began to swell, and presently he could not move it. He was in great pain. He called to his friend, Pipe, who was not far off, and told him his trouble, and Pipe took him on his back and carried him to his lodge.

Doctors were called in, and Arapaho Chief gave them what he had to give, and his sister gave all her property—two horses and whatever else she could spare. These doctors could do nothing to help him. At last came a sister of Turkey Leg, who had some medicine which she moistened and wrapped on the wound. It ceased to be painful almost at once. The woman took hold of the patient's right great toe and shook it; then she took hold of the right little finger and shook it, and of the left little finger and of the left great toe in succession, and shook each; then she said to the young man, "Now, you will see all sorts of snakes." Arapaho Chief felt very sick, as if he were going to die, and he did see many snakes, more than he had supposed were in the whole world. The woman began to rub his leg from thigh to ankle, and soon the swelling commenced to subside. The pain left him, and before long he was able to stand on his feet. Since that time, however, Arapaho Chief's leg has been bad, and not so strong as the other.

An example of successfully doctoring under animal tutelage was related by Spotted Wolf—later called Whistling Elk—who was born about the year 1800. The account was given me by his son, Spotted Wolf. The older Spotted Wolf once accidentally shot himself in the hand, and was apparently bleeding to death and already very weak. Doctors were present, trying to help him. He called his children to come and sit by him, saying that he was about to die. After the children had seated themselves, he dismissed all others present. He asked them to make two little smokes, or fires, one on each side of the door—one of big sagebrush and one of a little weed that bears a yellow flower.

This was in the middle of the day, and the camp was a large one. Not very long after the fires had been lighted, a coyote walked through the door and up to the man's side, and sat there looking at the door. After the coyote had been there a short time a badger entered, went over to the man, and lay down on its belly beside the coyote. Both were to the left of Spotted Wolf. A little while afterward, a kingfisher flew in the door and alighted on a back-rest, chattering and making a great noise. When the bird made this noise, Spotted Wolf understood its cries. It said

to him: "Get up now, and go to the stream and act as I do, diving down into the water. Also, you must promise to make a medicine lodge, and then I will save you." But the coyote said, "No, my friend, instead of making a medicine lodge, I should like to have you make a horse dance."

After a time the bird flew out through the smoke-hole of the lodge. Then the badger walked out, and all the women who were watching outside kept calling to one another, saying, "Look out for the dogs; do not let the dogs chase it!" Then the coyote also walked out, and they kept the dogs from chasing it.

After the animals had left the lodge, Spotted Wolf rose and went down to the stream, and all the people followed him to see what he should do. Before he went into the water, he said that first he would dive upstream and then would dive downstream. He asked the people to watch the water below him, and if they saw anything living appear, he would not die.

Then he went into the water, and did as he had said he would. The fourth time he dived downstream, and while he was under the water a big fish leaped out of the water and on the bank. When the people told him of this, he came out of the water and said, "Well, I shall live." He returned to the lodge and recovered. Afterward he made the horse dance as the coyote had requested, and after this he came sometimes to understand in part the speech of the wolves.

A RAISING OF THE DEAD

A long time ago a war-party of nearly a hundred warriors went out to attack the Pawnees. They traveled for many days, and at last came near to a Pawnee village, but before they discovered the village they saw some Pawnees on the prairie. A group of Cheyennes chased a young Pawnee who was on foot, and the young Cheyenne who had the fastest horse overtook and struck the Pawnee. Just as he turned his horse after doing this, another Pawnee a little way off shot at him and killed his horse. The young Cheyenne jumped up, and as he turned to run to his people, the Pawnee shot again, and the bullet went through the young man, from side to side, just at the short ribs. White Bull (born 1834) was close to the man who was shot, and saw it all.

The fight then stopped. The Pawnees returned to their village, and the Cheyennes took the wounded man and set out for their home. That night they went quite a long distance and camped. The next morning

they traveled on and reached their village. Some young men were sent ahead and gave the news, and some of the people of the camp went out to meet them.

The night after they reached their camp, White Bull heard people singing, and was curious to see what it was about. He went toward the place of the singing, and as he approached he saw a large fire burning in front of a large lodge, and when he reached the fire he learned that the young man who had been so badly wounded was being doctored. While White Bull stood there listening to the singing, someone came out of the lodge and said, "The young man cannot live long; he is dying." After a little while White Bull went nearer to the lodge, and presently he heard the wounded man say to the people: "My friends, I am growing blind; I cannot see. I want you to send quickly for my friend Buffalo Chips." A young man at once set out to get Buffalo Chips, who was in another village, so far away that the messenger did not arrive there until daylight the next morning. Buffalo Chips was a doctor, a young man, and a close friend of him who had been wounded.

The next morning, when White Bull went out, he saw a great crowd about the lodge where the wounded man had been, and walked there to see what was going on. The women about the lodge were all wailing; they told him that the young man was dead. Toward the middle of the day, two men were seen coming over the hills. A young man who had just come in with some horses galloped out and saw that the two were Buffalo Chips and the man who had gone to fetch him. The young man said to Buffalo Chips, "You have arrived too late; your friend is dead." Buffalo Chips answered, "*Ohohyaa!*"⁸ Then for a few moments he held his head down, looking at the ground between his knees. Then he looked up, and said, "Let us go into the camp."

To the young men who had ridden out he said: "Go back to the camp as quickly as you can, and tell them to move that lodge out to the middle of the circle where it is level and smooth, and to pitch it with the door to the rising sun. Have them make a bed at the back of the lodge, and let them carry my friend into the lodge and put him on that bed. Tell all the people that no one must go near the lodge, and no one must make any noise. Let all keep quiet."

⁸ An exclamation of grief, about equivalent to "Oh, that is terrible!"

Buffalo Chips remained where he was until all had been done as he had directed, and then started down the hill. The hill was steep, and at its foot there was a low place, in crossing which he passed out of sight of the people. After he had crossed the low place, just as he came in sight again, the people saw great flocks of birds of all sorts flying over his head and seeming to follow him. He went straight to the lodge where his friend's body was, and entered, and the birds followed him; some went in behind him through the door, and some at the smoke-hole, and some alighted on the lodge-poles. Soon Buffalo Chips looked out of the lodge and saw some of the dead man's relations—his brother, mother, and sisters—standing near, looking on. He spoke to them and said: "Make no noise. Do not mourn or cry. Tell all the people that no one must go near the lodge, and no one must make any noise. Tell the people in the camp to keep still all through this night. All night long birds will be coming in and out of the camp, and after a time there will be a fire here in the lodge."

Soon after it grew dark the people heard far off a moaning or a grunting sound. It seemed to draw constantly nearer, and at last it sounded like an owl coming and calling. When it had come close to the lodges, every now and then there seemed to be in the air a flash of light from this bird that was coming, flying. It flew straight into the lodge where the dead man was, and twice after it went into the lodge White Bull heard it make this noise, like an owl, and with each noise there was a flash of light, and the second light made did not go out; and there was light in the lodge all night long. After a time this bird went away into the hills, and as it went the people heard it make this noise, and every time it made the noise the light appeared, until the bird was hidden in the hills.

The close relations of the dead man sat in front of the lodge, at a little distance, and with them a number of the others, among them White Bull, some smoking, but no one talking. Pretty soon White Bull saw the lodge door lift and the light shine out, and then a man appeared. He called out, "Are you close by here?" He spoke no names, but all knew that he meant the dead man's relations. They answered, "We are here, close by." He said to them, "I want you to get some more robes, so as to make a better bed for my friend in here." While he was saying this, they all heard someone in the lodge make a slight noise, as if clearing his throat. The relations went away and got the robes, and brought them to the lodge. While they were at the

lodge door, Buffalo Chips said to them: "In the morning, at daylight, a bird will come and bring water to my friend. I do not wish it to be disturbed."

Just before sunrise a bird came flying over the camp to the back of that lodge, making a rough, harsh, croaking noise. It was flying high when it came into the camp, and it flew over the lodge, turned and alighted in front of the door, and walked in.⁹ Soon this bird came out of the lodge and flew off in the direction opposite to that from which it had come.

Presently Buffalo Chips came out of the lodge and said to the father and mother of the dead man, "I wish you to bring me something to eat, and something for your son." They brought food for two persons, and when the father and mother came in with the food, they found their dead son sitting up on the bed.

Buffalo Chips said to the father and mother, "I wish you to get a black horse and a blue horse. Let there be no white spot on either one. Have them ready for me in four nights. They are for me and for your son to ride. In four nights we will come out of this lodge, and we will both ride."

After four nights, in the morning, these two horses, saddled ready for riding, were led up and tied in front of this lodge. It was afternoon before the men came out. The wounded man wore in his head a white feather, and Buffalo Chips a black one. The wounded man got on the blue horse, and Buffalo Chips on the black. They rode to the right and all around the lodge. Then they passed outside the camp-circle and rode slowly around the village, and all the men and women came out and shook hands with the young man. Then they rode back to the lodge, dismounted, and went in. Then Buffalo Chips called out and said, "Now any of you people who wish to come in here may do so."

For two days more, until the camp was moved, these two men lived there alone in that lodge. When the camp moved, the young man was seen riding alone, well.



⁹ As described, it seems to have been a great blue heron.

DEATH CUSTOMS AND BELIEFS

WHEN a man died, anyone who would undertake it, usually his close relations, men and women, sometimes assisted by a comrade or a close friend, if the man had one, prepared the body for burial. It was dressed in its finest clothing, and sometimes friends and relatives brought their own best clothing for him to be buried in. The body, extended at full length, hands at sides, was placed on robes or blankets, which were then folded closely over it, and the bundle was lashed with ropes passed many times about it. The bundle was then taken out of the lodge, lashed on a travois, and carried to the place of deposit, the immediate family following.

With the man they placed his war implements—his gun, bow and arrows, and axe and knives—and also his pipe and tobacco and anything he especially valued. If the dead man had a bow and arrows in a cougar-skin case, this was perhaps not left with him, but might be given to his comrade or close friend if he had one very dear to him. This was done by the relatives even if the dead man had not mentioned it. His shield and his "medicine," which usually hung outside of the lodge, were not always deposited with him. If the dead man owned horses, his best horse was saddled and bridled, and shot near the grave. Sometimes several horses were so killed. If the body was put in a tree or on a scaffold, the horses were shot under it. This was done even though a man had killed himself, but in this case the dead man did not go to *Seyan*.¹

The spirit of the dead man found the trail where the footprints all pointed the same way, followed that to the Milky Way, and finally arrived at the camp in the stars, where he met his friends and relations and lived in the camp of the dead.

On the death of a person of some importance, an old man sang over the dead an old-time song, and prayed to the Great Spirit that created people—*Ma' kã mã i yõ' tsim ãn' stõm ai*, "Great spirit making maker." This ceremony, still performed, is a funeral service. The song is sung and the prayer made before the dead man is taken from the lodge or house in which he lies. The ceremony is short, occupying but a few minutes.

¹ Editor's Note: See "Place of the Dead," p. 198.



Baby burial in tree

The burial took place soon after death. Because of the fear of ghosts, dead bodies were not kept about. The dead person having become a ghost, his spirit was likely to linger near the body, and might take away with it the spirit of some person still living. This fear was felt especially as to little children. A ghost might easily take away with it the spirit of such an one, and would be likely selfishly to do so, in order to enjoy the child's society. The power to do this was believed to be especially strong so long as the body was not removed.

Relations testified to their grief by cutting off the hair. The wife, the mother, and often the sisters, cut their hair short, gashed their heads, and sometimes the calves of their legs, with knives. Sometimes they cut off a finger. Male relations did not cut their legs, but they unbraided their hair and let it hang loose.

Women gashed their legs in mourning only when some young male relative was wounded or killed in war. If his blood had been shed, they shed theirs; but if he died from sickness, they did not cut themselves. Sometimes after the death in war of a young man with many relatives, a long line of mourning women

was seen marching around the camp, their legs bare and bleeding. If the young man owned a war-bonnet, the first woman might carry it; another might carry the lance; his horses might be running loose near by, some painted as for war, with tails tied up, and feathers in manes and tails.

Women did not wash the blood from their legs and faces for a long time, and sometimes went bare-legged for months. The man's relations, male and female, mourned at the grave by wailing, as did also his close friends. A wife or a daughter or mother might remain at the grave mourning for twenty-four hours. Sometimes a wife or a mother remained at the grave, mourning and refusing to eat, until her relations went out and took her forcibly away. At intervals for a considerable time, whenever they passed the grave—even if it were twenty years after the death—they cried for the dead.

Among the Northern Cheyennes it is said that persons who at the loss of a relative did not cut off the hair or gash the person, were expected to mourn—that is, to wail—for a long time; while those who cut the hair or mutilated themselves were not obliged to wail. Some people did not like to wail and escaped the duty by having their hair cut. A woman who lost a member of her family by disease showed the outward signs of mourning for at least a year.

When a man died, all his property not placed with him—and often that of his father and even of his brothers—was given away, and to people who were not his relations. As soon as his death became known, the whole camp was likely to gather near the lodge. All the relatives were crying. The widow herself, or perhaps one of her sisters, began to carry out the property within the lodge, and to throw the things down on the ground before the various people standing about who were not relations. Then the lodge was torn down and given to someone, and soon everything was gone, and the widow perhaps retained only a single blanket with which to cover herself. This distribution took place immediately after the body was removed from the lodge, and this was always as soon after death as possible.

Thus, if a man died leaving a widow and two or three growing children, they retained nothing. They went to their grandfather or uncles, and for a year or two lived about with such relatives. In the course of this time, however, some one of her relatives was very likely to have given a lodge to the widow, and she camped near a brother, who supplied her with

meat; and after a time she began to get her children back, one by one, until at last all were living with her again. If she had growing boys, they learned to hunt, and assisted in supporting her and the sisters. Such a family always got along somehow. Often widows married again. A widow decided for herself whether she would marry, or whom she would marry. When a man asked a widow to marry him, she might—after stipulating for the support and good treatment of her children—tell him to give a horse to her father, or to one of her brothers, and she would marry him.

The bodies of men, women, and children were placed on scaffolds in trees, on scaffolds on poles on the prairie, on scaffolds or on beds in a lodge, and in caves or crevices in the rocks, or were placed on the ground and stones piled over them.

Sometimes, if several people died at the same time, as often happened in epidemics, or after a battle, two or three might be placed on the same scaffold in a tree.

The body of a man who died in battle, however, was left lying on the prairie, sometimes covered with a blanket, oftener not covered. Men thought it well that the wolves, coyotes, eagles, buzzards, and other animals should eat their flesh, and scatter their bodies far and wide over the prairie.

When a man wounded in battle was being transported to camp, and died on the way, they made a little house, somewhat like a sweat-lodge, and placed him in it, wrapped in blankets on a bed of white sage. The shelter was covered with grass, over which the bark of trees was laid, and over all a sheet was spread and pinned down all around.

People who sang songs of mourning for the dead were likely to sing the songs of the soldier band to which the man belonged. His father, mother, sisters, or aunts might sing these. If he was a chief, they sang songs of the chief soldier band, *Wihunutkiu*. There were no words to these songs.

The older Cheyennes formerly had much to say about the new diseases introduced by white men, which were very fatal. The cholera of 1849 was perhaps more fatal to the Cheyennes than any other of these epidemics, for it is said to have killed half the tribe. When it appeared, half of the Cheyennes were camped on the Smoky Hill River, in present Kansas, and half in the Kiowa camp on the Canadian River, where the Kiowas were holding their Medicine Lodge.

Porcupine Bull, the son of White Face Bull, chief of the Oivimannah, was present at the Kiowa Medicine Lodge when the cholera broke out there. It killed a Kiowa dancer in the dance lodge; and then an Osage, sitting outside watching the dance, was struck. White Face Bull shouted to the Cheyennes to run to their camp and flee. They broke camp at once and fled north all night, reaching the Cimarron in the morning. As soon as they made camp, people began to die, among them Owl Woman, the mother of Colonel Bent's wife. Little Old Man, a very brave man, donned his war-dress, mounted his war-horse, and rode through the camp with a lance in his hand, shouting, "If I could see this thing [the cholera], if I knew where it came from, I would go there and fight it!" As he was doing this he was seized with the cramps, fell from his horse, and died in his wife's arms. Again the people rushed away in terror, and all night fled through the sandhills to the Arkansas. It was on this flight toward the north from the Kiowa camp that the Hevhaitaniu crossed the Arkansas and met Gentle Horse coming south with cholera in his camp.



Box graves covered with stones



DEITIES AND SPIRITS

NO subject is more difficult of treatment than one which deals with the beliefs of any people concerning abstract matters. It is not easy to learn from men and women of our own kin and kind just what are their beliefs concerning religion, and what we term superstitions. If this is true among civilized people, whose language we speak, whose education and whose experiences are essentially our own, it is obviously much more difficult to determine the beliefs of an alien race, speaking an unknown tongue, and with a wholly different inheritance, training, and viewpoint.

Like other peoples of the plains, the Cheyennes personified the elements; to certain birds, animals, and natural objects they attributed mysterious powers, and believed in the transference of such powers from the birds and animals to man. Prayers were offered to these natural objects; yet, as has been said in another place, not to the actual animals, but rather to the qualities, or forces, which these animals typified, or which took their shape. Yet in the Cheyenne community, as with civilized people, there was great individual diversity of faith and feeling. Some men believed firmly in spirits, birds, and animals; others were almost skeptics. It is thus possible to receive from two individuals in the tribe quite divergent opinions concerning the same matter.

DEITIES

The Cheyennes say there is a principal god who lives up above—*Heammawibio*—and that there is also a god living under the ground—*Abk tun o' wibio*. Both are beneficent and they possess like powers. Four powerful spirits dwell at the four points of the compass. In smoking, the first smokes are offered to these six powers. The stem of the pipe is pointed first to the sky, then down to the earth, then to the east, to the south, west, and north. The smoker prays, using his own form of words, mentioning each power by name, and asking him to smoke. Ordinary people use no set formula in addressing these spirits. They call them

by name and ask for what they want—for health, for abundance of food, or that their children may not be ill. The man setting out on a war-party asked that he might not be wounded or killed, and that he might count a coup.

Heammawibio, the Wise One Above, was the chief god. He was the Creator; he first of all was addressed in prayer, and to him the first smoke was offered. The man who prayed looked upward, and perhaps held his hands toward the sky, saying, "I am poor, and in need; help me"—to food, health, long life, success in war, or whatever it might be that he especially desired.

The dwelling place of *Heammawibio* is denoted by his name, which is composed of the adverb *hē' ämmä*, above, and *wi'bio*, a word closely related to *wi'hiu*, chief. *Wibio* also means spider, and white man, and appears to embody the idea of mental ability of an order higher than common—superior intelligence. All its uses seem to refer to this mental power. To the Indian the white man appears superior in intelligence to other men. He has great knowledge, wonderful implements, and clever ways. When he came, he knew more than the Indians, and taught them how to do things they had never done before or, indeed, had ever thought of doing. On account of his ability they called him *wibio*. The spider spins a web, and goes up and down, seemingly walking on nothing. It is more able than other insects; hence its name.

Next after *Heammawibio* the power of the earth is named in prayer. It is implored to make everything grow which we eat, so that we may live; to make the water flow, that we may drink; to keep the ground firm, that we may live and walk on it; to make grow those plants and herbs that we use to heal ourselves when we are sick; and to cause to grow also the grass on which the animals feed.

"The great power put the earth here, and must have put us on it. Without the earth nothing could live. There could be no animals nor plants. The father of life taught us this." Such reverence for the earth is general among western Indians.¹ It was said by

¹ *American Anthropologist*, vol. IX, p. 3, Jan.-Mar., 1907.

one man that he believed the sun, the moon, and *Heammawihio* to represent the same person.

The sacrifice to the four directions, called *nivstaniwoo*, is offered that the owner of the lodge may live long, and that lodge may be firm on the ground and may not blow down. It is believed by some that the four spirits who live in the four directions (possibly, as some say, the winds which blow from the four directions) exercise a potent influence over the lives and fortunes of people. These are all well disposed and friendly. Nevertheless, they are to be propitiated.

When *Heammawihio* first made people, he made them to live. When they died they were to be dead for only four nights, and then they would live again. After a little time the Creator found that this would not do. It would have made people too brave, and they would have done too much killing. That is why now people die forever. If it had continued as at first, people would have been like the bald eagle. You may go out and kill a bald eagle, and take him home and use his feathers, and in four days, if you go back to the place where you killed him, you will again find the bald eagle on or near its nest.

At one time *Heammawihio* was with the people on the earth. He it was who taught them how to make stone arrowpoints, and knives of stone and bone for cutting. He instructed them how to take the arrowpoints he had taught them to make, and to put them on shafts, showed them how to make a bow, and how to use the arrows for shooting. He told them that the animals, the buffalo, the elk, and the deer—all the animals that are on the earth—and the birds of different kinds, were for them to kill and subsist on. They made their fire, as he taught them, with two sticks rubbed together till the fire started, and also by knocking together two hard stones.

In those days *Heammawihio* told them that there existed many other peoples that they had never seen, and that after a time they would meet them; they would find all these people armed as they were, with stone arrows, and stone and bone knives; he had taught all the people on the land the same way to live.

Heammawihio showed them the corn, and told them to plant, and cultivate, and eat it, saying that after a long time all people would learn to plant and raise grain, and to grow other things for their subsistence. On the other side of the big water, he said, a different people were living, and a day would come when these people would cross over to this side of that water, and they would see them. A time would

come when there would be wars, and many people would be killed.²

After *Heammawihio* had been long with them and had taught them how to live, he told them that he was going up to the sky, that he would watch over them, and that when they died they should come to him; while they were on earth they might have much trouble, but when they died all would go up into the sky and live with him.

PLACE OF THE DEAD

Sēyān,³ the place of the dead, is above, where *Heammawihio* lives. *Seyan* is reached by following the Hanging Road, the Milky Way (*Ē kūt sī bīm' mī yo*). There the dead live as they lived on earth—they chase buffalo, hunt other game, and go to war. Occasionally people who have been very sick believe that they have died and gone to this country, and then have returned again, but they seem never actually to reach these camps of the dead. They perhaps come within a short distance of the village, and may meet and talk with people coming from and going to it, but they never quite reach it. Before doing so they return to life. They describe the camps, and tell of the white lodges handsomely painted, the people passing to and fro, the scaffold hung with drying meat, the women tanning robes, all the sights and sounds of a camp, just as they know it here.

Picking Bones Woman—sister of Red Eagle, a Northern Cheyenne doctor—when eighty-four years of age (born about 1818) told me of her experience about fifty-four years earlier (1848) when she had died and gone to the place of the dead.

Not very long after she had been married, she was very ill on the South Canadian. One morning, just after the sun had risen, she was sitting, bent over, when someone called to her “Picking Bones, they want you over there! Your mother wants you!” Her mother had long been dead.

She arose and left the lodge and went straight north. She did not walk on the ground; she was running, but her feet did not touch the ground—they seemed to move a little way above it. She looked neither to the right nor left, but straight before her.

² By some men these acts and prophecies are credited to the culture hero *Mōtsī i' ū iv*.

³ *Sēhān*, “dead,” *Petter Dictionary*, p. 344.

She felt as if she were flying. As she looked down, the grass appeared yellowish-red before her. All at once she came to the top of a hill, and looking at the ground before her, it seemed green. Then just in front of her she saw a big bluff, and in it a door. She ran right up against the door, and when she struck it, it opened and she fell through the door on her left side. She felt the unevenness of the ground against her body as she lay there.

Someone spoke to her, and said, "Your mother has gone back." She did not see the face of the person who spoke, but she saw his legs from the knees down; he wore blue striped leggings. As she rose to her feet, she saw old men sitting all about her. They had their hair dressed in different ways, according to the old-time fashion, some of them having it tied up in great bunches on the forehead. The bodies of all were naked, but all wore buffalo-ropes about their waists and legs. One man who sat nearest to her she recognized; it was Red Water, who had been dead a long time. The person who had spoken to her, spoke again, saying, "You must take this baby back with you; it is your husband's child." She stretched out her arms, and he put into them the naked child, which she held. She then went out the door and came back to her lodge just as she had gone from it, but carrying the baby before her. While she was going back she did not touch the ground, but went just as if she were flying. She remembers reaching her home and going in, holding the baby. Her husband was sitting there, and she said to him, "Here is your child; take it." She handed it to him. Then she turned and looked at her bed, and saw there her body lying on the bed. She does not know how her spirit went back to the body, but when she came to herself she was sitting up. She rose to her feet, and when she did so she felt well.

Her body had not been gone from the lodge. No baby had been in the lodge.

SOUL OR SHADE

A man's spirit or living principle is called his shade or shadow, *tāsōom'*; that is, the soul, mind, or spiritual part; not the body, the immortal part. *Tasoom* is also the shadow of any animate thing, as a man, horse, bird, or dog. It is not the shadow of a tree, a rock, or a building. Of a dying person who has lost consciousness and merely breathes, they may say, "His *tasoom* has been gone a long time; he is only just breathing."

Those who die become shadows, or spirits. If a man sees his shade, it is a sign that he will soon die. A sick man may send for a friend to come to him, and say: "Well, my friend, I have sent for you that I may see you once more, for I am about to die. I have seen my shadow."

Women saw their shadows more often than men, and with them the vision was not certainly followed by death. If an old woman had been badly frightened, she might say, "I was so badly frightened that I saw my shadow." The idea seems to be that her life was literally frightened out of her body, and for a moment stood before her. The shadow is a mere shape, seen for an instant, and then gone. It is like a shadow in having no detail; no clothing, no features—a silhouette.

Years ago Indians commonly refused to be photographed, because they believed that when the picture was taken away the life of the subject was taken away too, and the actual man would die. They regarded the photographic print as the man's shadow. In the same way, in early days when little trade mirrors were first received, many people refused to look into them, because they would see their shadows, and bad luck would follow.

NATURAL PHENOMENA

A place is told of, far to the north, where there are always clouds, and the sun can never shine through them to heat anything. From this place comes a being known as *Hō im' ā bā*, who brings the winter. *Hoimaha* appears as a man, who is white. He comes in a white cloud from the north, and when he approaches he says to the Sun: "I am coming. I am coming. Back away now, because I am going to make it cold all over the land!" As he comes on, he spreads this cold all over a wide country, and it is cold everywhere.

When *Hoimaha* came in winter, and it snowed, and it was thought that too much snow was likely to fall, the people used to be called together and to have a feast. Then they filled the pipe, offered it to *Hoimaha*, calling him "Father," and "Grandfather above," and prayed to him, asking him to stop the snow from falling so that they might be able to kill their food animals, and eat and live.

In the spring, as the Sun gets higher and higher, he says to the cold: "Go back now whence you came. I wish to heat the earth, and to make the grass and all things grow." Then the cold goes back.



Porcupine

So it is that each one has its power. At one time that person overpowers, and again the Sun overpowers. They follow each other back and forth.

The Thunder often appears as a great bird, somewhat like an eagle, but much larger. Sometimes he is seen riding on a white horse. Old men have said that it was *Heammaiwihio* who made the Thunderbird; it was his bird. In the ancient days, if they lost their

arrows which had been given them by *Motsiuu*, or if they forgot how to make them, then this bird would instruct them.

The Thunderbird makes the thunder and lightning and storm. It goes south at the approach of winter, and returns from the warm country with the Sun, bringing the heat and the rain. It shoots an arrow, but they never see it. Sometimes it kills people and ani-

mals, but they do not see the arrow. Rarely, however, they find one of the old stone arrowpoints, which some people think is the head of the Thunderbird's arrow.

A certain species of butterfly, gray in color, with blue eyes, and with rounded and black striped wings, is called the thunder parasite (*nā' nō mī' hīs tī im*). These butterflies are oftenest seen just before or after a thunderstorm, and while the report of thunder is heard, hence the name. The belief seems to be that the Thunderbird, when angry, shakes himself, and his parasites fall from him.

When the Thunder began in spring, they used to fill the pipe, offer a smoke to the Thunder, and ask him to take pity on them. They sang and prayed, saying: "Far back, many of our people have died and are gone. We are now a poor people. Take pity on us. Give us food of all kinds on the earth, and we will all eat together and be friends." They prayed to the Thunder because he was bringing the warmth, and asked him to make the berries and all things grow.

When the Thunder, bringing the rain from the south, brought too much rain, they went through the same ceremony as to *Hoimaha* in winter, addressing prayers to the Thunder, calling him "Father," and "Grandfather above," and asking him to stop the rain. This was long ago.

The rainbow, *no nūn' o*, is regarded as a device for catching something, a trap. The same word is used for fishing line, or for any other device by which animals are caught. When the rainbow appears, the rain almost stops falling; hence the rainbow is regarded as having caught or trapped the thunder, that is, the rain, and caused the storm to cease.

WATER SPIRITS AND MONSTERS

Spirits or powers dwell in the springs, in the rivers, in the hills, and in certain high bluffs. Sacrifices are offered and prayers made at such places—for example, at the Painted Rocks, on the west side of the Rosebud, six or seven miles below Lamedeer, Montana, where pictures have been painted, and in a similar place, with pictures, in the Big Horn Mountains. The spirits are in no respect harmful, but there is a possibility that they may become offended and then may work injury to human beings. As their power is great, it is important that they be propitiated with sacrifices and gifts, and made favorable, so that this power may be

exercised in one's behalf. Usually spirits are not seen, but they may take material form.

The Cheyennes believe in underwater people and underwater monsters. The underwater people were not unlike those who live on the prairie; they possessed buffalo, and led a life similar to that of ordinary people. These underwater people, however, appear to have had the power of changing their form; but this may not have been a characteristic of them as underwater people; rather it may merely have been evidence of their unusual powers.

Underwater monsters were of various sorts, and, whether harmful or not, they were alarming. One underwater monster was the *mīb'n*,⁴ described as somewhat like a very large lizard, with one or two horns on the head, and often covered, or partly covered, with hair. Sometimes these monsters caught people who went into the water, and swallowed them. The Thunderbird has been known to kill these monsters.⁵ Usually but a single one lives in a lake, or in a considerable stretch of river. The *mībn* is not necessarily harmful. If people pray and offer sacrifices to it, they are likely to have good fortune, but if they treat it disrespectfully, they will have bad luck.

Although in these days no one professes ever to have seen these monsters, many stories are told of the *mībn*. This animal is said sometimes to have seized, or overturned, a bull-boat when people were crossing the Missouri River, and those in the boat were not seen again.

GHOSTS

Ghosts are greatly feared. As a rule these do not seem to work much actual harm, but they come about and whistle and frighten people. If a person should be where there were too many ghosts, they might draw his mouth down on one side, and it would remain so. Such things are said to have happened.

Mīs'tāi, ghost (not usually of a person), is very rarely seen, but is often felt or heard. Sometimes when one is walking at night through the timber, where it is very dark, a ghost may seize robe or blanket and give it a tug. Ghosts sometimes scratch or tap

⁴ *Mīb'*, singular; *mīb' nīō*, plural, applied to a mythical animal inhabiting water, and sometimes to a very large snake.

⁵ A concept perhaps borrowed from the Dakotas.

on the lodge-skins, or make strange and mysterious noises just outside the lodge. People who are walking through the timber at night are likely to sing loudly, or to utter loud calls, to frighten away the ghosts; and generally when the ghosts show that they are near at hand, anyone who possesses spiritual power will sing a medicine song to drive them away. Ghosts are believed to be from the dead, but there is scarcely anything in common to *mistai* and *tasoom*, except the fact that both are from the dead. *Mistai* is always alarming, but never, so far as known, does any actual harm. It seems to take pleasure in frightening people, and to be somewhat like the white man's idea of a hobgoblin, or malicious elf. On the other hand, *mistai* may take various forms, or perhaps there may be several kinds.

Mistai also means owl, sometimes a mysterious one, and sometimes just an ordinary owl; usually the great horned owl (*Bubo*), but sometimes the little screech owl (*Megascops*). They say that the owl is not a natural bird, and that some owls are the ghosts of people. People who hear an owl cry may be able to tell whose ghost it is that is speaking.

The ghost of a person is called *si'yūbk*, which appears to mean rather the skeleton of a person. A pile of human bones would be called *siyubk*. Some people declare that it is the *siyubk* that taps on the lodge-skins, whistles down the smoke-hole, and makes queer noises near the lodge; nevertheless, when they hear these noises, people usually say: "What is that? It must be a *mistai*."

As might be supposed, there is much confusion in the popular mind as to the qualities and relations of these different kinds of spirits.

Wolf Chief was once camped at Colony, Oklahoma, where Foster's store stood in 1905. It was a moonlight night and he was feeding his mules near his lodge; after feeding, he led them to the hill to picket them. As he was returning, he passed by the lodge of a very old woman, named Root Woman, and saw someone peeping in through her lodge door. Wolf Chief did not know who it was, but stopped when opposite her lodge. While he stood there, this person turned and came toward him. Wolf Chief paid no special attention to him till he saw him stand in the path, with his head and shoulders partly bent over. Wolf Chief then thought that someone was trying to play a trick on him, and reached his hand out and tried to touch the person, but could not do so. Every time he reached out his hand, the person would disappear and then reappear again. By this time Wolf

Chief knew that it was a ghost and went back to his lodge as fast as he could. The ghost then went back to Root Woman's lodge and dragged her out, dislocating her arm. She crawled up to Wolf Chief's lodge and told him about it. Her arm after that was always weak and loose at the shoulder.

When Wolf Chief was very young, one winter long before the big cholera year (1849), the Hair Rope People moved to the South Platte. Yellow Wolf was their leader. When they arrived, they found a large camp of Cheyennes already there, and they made camp not far off. The women from this camp came to meet them, and said: "Why don't you camp closer to us? There is a ghost here, which comes every night and chases all the people into their lodges. No one dares to go out after sundown." That evening the other village invited the men of the Hair Rope People to come to a feast, and soon after dark, all the dogs in their village began to bark, but they could find no reason for it. Someone said, "Maybe that is the ghost"; but others said, "No, they are probably barking at the wolves and coyotes." Wolf Chief was in his father's lodge, the door of which was a Mexican blanket hanging in front. The dogs began to run into the lodge. As all the men were away, the women crowded together at one side of the lodge and they could hear a robe being dragged around the lodge on the snow; it was moonlight. As the ghost went by, it threw open the door of their lodge and did the same to all the other lodges. Again they heard it coming, and this time the ghost tore the blanket off the doorway. Then they heard nothing more. Wolf Chief's mother went out and hung another door on the lodge. After a time the men came back and the women told them what had happened. Wolf Chief's father said, "I think some young fellow has been playing ghost to frighten you."

Next morning they could not find the Mexican blanket, but some people who were driving horses to water saw, out on the river, the blanket spread upon the ice and on it a human skull. They told of this and both camps went down to see it. One of the men was cutting a hole the ice to water his horses, when a medicine man said to him, "Give me your axe." This medicine man went up to the skull and cut a hole in the ice near it; then wrapped the skull in the blanket and pushed it into the water and under the ice. The ghost never again troubled the camp. Wolf Chief's father and mother saw the skull, but he was afraid to go down and see it himself.

PROPHETS OR SEERS

ANCIENTLY there were believed to be prophets or seers—men or women who could announce what was about to happen or could tell what might be occurring at the time at a distance. Persons possessing this gift of prophecy received their knowledge in different ways, from birds or animals, as already suggested, or from their dreams or secret helpers. Horn, later named Blind Bull, formerly had this power in high degree. He was born toward the end of the eighteenth century and was the father of Brave Wolf, also known as Box Elder or Maple (died about 1885), and to Brave Wolf the father had taught all that he knew. This knowledge came to Horn, and later to his son, through the wolves, though they did not give him his power; they were only the messengers who brought it. His power came from the *maiyun*. The wolves with whom these two men communicated told Brave Wolf that he would die of old age; he would not be killed in battle; yet he was much on the warpath and often in danger.

His power was such that he always knew what was going to happen. Before starting on one of his early warpaths he predicted that he would bring back captives, and he returned with four captured Pawnee women. A second time he foretold that he would bring back captives; he did so. His predictions are reported always to have been realized.

The warnings conveyed by dreams greatly influenced these people. Most of them were encouraged by favorable, or depressed by bad, dreams, though there were some who did not greatly regard them. As a rule, however, an unfavorable dream would divert a man from any enterprise.

Helpful spirits appeared to them in dreams. A man who went it on the hills to suffer might have some *maiyu* appear to him in his sleep, and thereafter the spirit which appeared was his special protecting power, or secret helper. Such helpers did not usually appear to men before they were twenty years of age; often not until after they had been to war, and perhaps been through the ceremonies of the Medicine Lodge. The power which appeared might have the form of bird, mammal, or person. It advised the man how to act, and might promise to help him. Such a helper is called *mā ī yūn a hūh' ta*, "a spirit told me in sleep."

Some men had the power to call to them this secret helper, from whom they might ask advice or

information. This was not always done in the same way, for different men employed different methods. Usually many people were present, and singers were always asked into the lodge. The man unwrapped his sacred things; the singers chanted their spiritual songs, and the fire was permitted to die down, until the lodge was dark. Before the fire was out, the man who was calling the spirit was tied with four bowstrings. Each finger of each hand was tied separately to the next finger, in a hard knot, and the ends of the bowstrings on each hand were tied together, behind his back, so that his hands were tightly bound there. His feet were tied together in the same way, each toe being tied to the next one in a hard knot, and the feet bound together by the bowstrings. Thus tied, he sat at the back of the lodge, and sometimes was tied to one of the lodge-poles. At times a little shelter, shaped like a sweat-lodge, was built in the middle of the lodge, and the man was put in that.

After the fire had gone out, in some interval of the singing the lodge was shaken as if by a strong wind; the poles creaked and suddenly in the lodge a strange voice was heard, talking to the man. The secret helper was perhaps called to ask where there were buffalo; or where there were enemies; where missing people were; or even where lost horses might be found. Some times the secret helper told what was happening at a distance; or perhaps warned the camp of enemies near at hand. After the spirit had gone, and a light had again been made, the man was found to be untied, and the bowstrings were lying in the door tied in innumerable knots. It was believed that the spirits untied him.

In what is now Oklahoma lived a man who possessed this power in an unusual degree. His name was Stone Forehead. He could call to him his *maiyu*, and sometimes while he was talking with the spirit, it would call out, "Make a light!" and when the fire had blazed up it would be seen that Stone Forehead had disappeared, although sometimes his rattle would be seen and heard moving alone through the air, as if shaken by a person. Sometimes this man would dance through the camp carrying in one hand a pole and in the other a drum. Often he threw the drum in the air, and it would fly a long way, then suddenly turn and fly back, come to the end of the pole, and slide down the pole to his hand. He possessed a little ball which he could make fly about in the same way.

Among the Northern Cheyennes, Crazy Mule had strong mysterious power.



Medicine Lodge

During the Medicine Lodge celebration in the summer of 1902, a ceremony was held at which a man was tied with bowstrings and then covered up and the light extinguished. Under the covering was placed a whistle and a pipe. The whistle sounded during the period of darkness. In a few moments the light was renewed, and the man was found to be untied. During the ceremony two young men drummed on two beaded parfleches about one foot wide and eighteen or twenty inches long. These young men were supposed to represent the male and the female badger. The ceremony on this occasion was undertaken for the purpose of learning who had picked up some property lost from a wagon a few days before. The spirits came in response to such an invocation, and talked with the man who was tied up; last of all might

come the badger to talk to the man and answer his questions. The badger was known by his voice.

The story of a remarkable happening in which White Bull figured has been current among the Cheyennes ever since it took place in 1867. White Bull had determined to call to him his secret helper, which was done in an unusual way. A hole deep enough for a man to sit in was dug in the ground. The soldiers went up to the hills and brought down a slab of sandstone, which they placed over the hole in which the man was to sit. It took a number of men to move this stone. It was too large to be carried, and could be brought only by being turned over, end over end. White Bull, tied as above described, was put in the hole. After the slab had been put over the hole, large stones were piled on the slab and a lodge was

pitched over it. The singers entered and began to sing their songs. After a time White Bull's voice was heard down in the hole, talking to a strange voice. Presently the voices ceased, and nothing more was heard; but not very long after White Bull walked into the lodge through the door.

White Bull himself told me the story of this event as he remembers it:

"When I was fifteen years of age I went out into the hills to starve myself and to pray for power. While I was doing this, there appeared to me in my dreams a little man whose face was very handsome. He said to me: 'Friend, some day I wish you to dig a big hole in the ground, and get into it, and then put a big rock over the hole in which you are. Let the rock be a big one, even if it should be so big that it would take a number of people to lift it. I will be with you and help you, and will bring you out safely.'

"It was a long time afterward that we were camped on the Rosebud. There were four camps, three of Sioux and one of Cheyennes. This was thirty-four years ago [in 1867]. It was then that I made up my mind that I would now do what the little man had told me, and instructed the people to dig the hole, and sent a great crowd of them to go out and bring in a big rock. The Cheyennes were grumbling greatly about it, and said among themselves, 'He can never get out of that hole, and the stone is so big that very likely we cannot get it off the hole, and he will die there.'

"Over the hole there was pitched a lodge so large that three lodge coverings were needed to cover the poles. There was a great gathering and a great feast, and the people ate buffalo-meat and dog-meat and dried fruit. The Cheyennes kept talking about what I was going to do, and said to each other: 'Let no one go away who has helped to bring this rock here. He can never get out of this hole, and we shall have to take the rock off again. Since we can remember, nothing of this kind has been attempted—it is foolish!'

"A complete buffalo-robe was to be spread over the hole, the head pointing to the rising sun. On the hair-side this robe was painted with a red spot on the right shoulder, a black spot on the right hip, a white spot on the left hip, and a yellow spot on the left shoulder. On the rump was painted the yellow figure of the moon, and on the hump, the red sun, and a red stripe ran down the back—the sun's road or path through the sky.

"I was put in the hole, tied hand and foot, just at night. The robe was spread over the hole, and with

great labor the stone was put on the hole. On the four corners of the big stone were placed four other stones, each one as large as a strong man could lift. Then over the rock was built the frame of a sweat-house, and this was covered with robes. There were many people in the lodge—three rows deep—and they were beginning to sing their medicine songs.

"I sat in the hole under the rock; my hands were tied behind my back by the wrists, and my fingers were tied together with a bowstring. The rope from my wrists ran over my shoulders and tied my feet together at the ankles. My upper arms were tied tightly to my thigh bones. All the ropes were tied tight—by people who did not believe that I could do this thing. I sat there, with my face toward the rising sun [east]. For a little while, after I was put in the hole, I seemed to know nothing that was happening. Then I heard something moving by my side, and I looked, and there was the little man. He patted me on the back and sides, and said to me, 'Why have they got you here?'

"I answered him, 'The people think they are going to be in trouble, and they want help.'

"The little man said, 'Shut your eyes.' I did so, and the little man slapped me on the sole of my right foot, and then on the sole of the left, and took me by the hair and seemed to pull me up a little. Then the little man said, 'Open your eyes.' I did so, and found myself standing on the ground in front of the big lodge.

"Standing just in front of me was a woman, who at that very moment called out to the people in the lodge, 'Why do you not hurry and sing a medicine song before he gets smothered under that big rock?'

"Who is to be smothered?' I said to her, and she looked back at me and was astonished to see me.

"Let them finish their song,' I said, 'and then ask them to make a light, and let us have something to eat, for I am hungry.'

"Soon the news got about outside that I was there, and at length those in the lodge heard of it they could hardly believe it.

"Someone said, 'Look in the hole.' My wife was the first one to push her head into the sweat-house. She called out: 'The rock is moved off the hole. He is not there.' The rocks were found piled up on one side of the hole, the robe on top of them, and the ropes and strings, with which I had been tied, on the robe."



ANIMAL BELIEFS

BUFFALO

As with most prairie tribes, the buffalo was greatly revered. Before the entrance of every sweat-lodge, propped up against a sagebrush, a pile of stones, or a mound of earth, stands an old buffalo-skull. A very long time ago, a medicine man's dream told him to make a sweat-house, and then to take the skull of a bull—one that had been killed for a long time—and to put it in front of the sweat-house, and then to go in and take a sweat. When he came out, he should fill the pipe and hold the pipe to *Heammawibio*, and ask him always to keep plenty of buffalo on the earth for the people to eat. He must present the pipe to the skull also, and smoke to it, and must ask the skull to rise to its feet, clothe itself with flesh, and come to life, so that the people might have its meat to eat, and its skin to make their lodges. At the same time they prayed to the buffalo in general asking them to travel over smooth ground, not to run where it was rough and where there was danger that the horses might fall and break men's limbs.

Sometimes the buffalo-bulls talked to them, and sometimes the elk and the bear. It was always a male that talked. Not everyone could understand their language. Only now and then a person understood.

DEER AND ELK

The deer has much power, which may be used for good or for evil. The mule-deer is a great spiritual helper. From the cavities beneath the eyes, it possesses the power to shoot disease-arrows at a man; or, if a doctor carries the tail of one it will help him so to afflict a person whom he may wish to harm. On the other hand, if favorably inclined, the mule-deer may help a person in many ways. As elsewhere pointed out, the white-tail deer is a powerful helper in love affairs. While the deer's power may be used for good or for evil, the power of the antelope is all good. To dream about an antelope is fortunate.

Elk have great power, and are hard to kill. They can endure a great deal. If a man dreams of an elk, it will be a great help to him. The elk has power like that of the mule-deer, but it is stronger.



Painted buffalo skull

BADGER, SKUNK, AND BEAVER

The beaver was revered to some extent, no doubt because of the intelligence which was attributed to it, from the fact that beavers built dams to raise the waters in streams, and houses to live in. It is said that in very old times beavers were not often killed, and that no Cheyenne woman would dress or even handle a beaver-skin. There was no such feeling about the otter—regarded by the Blackfeet as related to the beaver. The Cheyennes have always killed the otter, using its skin to make bow-cases and quivers, and also to wrap about the braids of the hair.

The skunk possesses power. Doctors used its hide to hold their medicine. Men tied its tail to their horses' tails in war. It is engraved in ornament on the seeds employed by women gambling, and is painted on robes and lodges.

The Cheyennes still consider the badger very powerful. In ancient times it talked to people, if they met it on the prairie, and advised them what they ought to do and how they should live. They still pray to the badger and smoke to him, and often offer him a portion of the food when they eat, saying as they offer it, "*Mā' āh kū tsit o mīss' ī*", that is, "Badger, eat."

When the pipe is offered to the earth, it is thought to be offered in part to the badger.

The bear possesses power—spiritual power. He can heal himself, and can heal other bears. He is a great medicine animal. In old times no Cheyenne woman might dress a bear-skin.

WOLVES

In ancient times no one killed wolves or coyotes, and women would not handle their skins. Even today some women will not handle a wolf-skin or a coyote-skin. Coyotes have always been more sacred than wolves, possibly because they are more intelligent. The people used to pray to the coyotes, asking them to lead, guide, and warn them. Some men could interpret the howling of wolves and coyotes.

If the sun rises on a wolf asleep, it dies. It must have lain during the night and slept until the sun rose. During the day it can lie down and sleep in the sun.

A man who could understand the speech of the wolves would turn back if a wolf or a coyote were killed by any member of a war-party with which he was journeying. These animals were seldom killed by the Cheyennes in old times, possibly because the medicine arrows were always wrapped up in the skin of coyote.

Once some young men who were on the warpath captured some young wolves, which they were going to eat. Before they killed them they heard someone singing, not far off. They did not know who this might be, and listened. The purport of the song was that if the young men would spare her children, and take pity on her, they would not have bad luck. They kept looking all about to see who it was that was singing, and at last discovered that it was a she-wolf. They set her children free, and next morning had gone only a little way farther when they killed a Pawnee.

About 1854 or 1855, William Rowland was in the Cheyenne camp in the late autumn. About nine or ten o'clock at night a coyote near at hand set up a great howling. Soon after this an old man went around through the camp and announced that the wolf had been talking to him, and that it had told him that a war-party of Pawnees was near, and was about to attack the camp; that all must be prepared. The next morning the camp was attacked by Pawnees, who were driven off.

Gentle Horse once told me of an old man who declared that the wolves advised him what to do, and

gave him medicine so that he could turn himself into a wolf. He could understand what the wolves said when they howled. A wolf would come on a hill and howl, and the man would understand what it said. Perhaps the wolf would say to the people, "Just behind this hill that I am standing on there are enemies." They generally found the enemies just where the wolf told them they were. In old times there were men who understood the talk of various animals, and of different birds, as crows and magpies.

I have already referred to the gift of prophecy derived through the wolves by Horn and transmitted by him to his son, Brave Wolf.¹

EAGLES

As with all other Indians, a high value is set on eagle-feathers. They prize chiefly the feathers of the gray eagle (*H. leucocephalus*). The speckle-tailed eagle, that is, the golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), seems to have been the least esteemed of the three kinds which they knew. They secured many eagle-feathers by finding an eagle's nest in spring, and taking the young and rearing them in captivity. After the eagles had reached full size they pulled out the tail-feathers three times. After they had been pulled out the first time they grew again, and the second and third time; but after that they would not grow again. They thus obtained thirty-six feathers from an eagle. If secured soon after they were hatched, the young eagles were easily reared. They were kept tethered by the legs to a pin driven in the ground.

As before mentioned, two or three generations ago the Cheyennes caught eagles as did other Plains tribes, but of late years they have not used these eagle traps.

Eagles possessed great power. Once a young man went out and found a nest, and took from it two eaglets still covered with down. He reared them, killed them, and took the feathers. The next year he did the same thing. No matter where the camp might be, at the proper time of the year this young man went back to this nest to get the eagles. The third year he did the same thing; and the fourth time he went he brought eagles from the nest.

There was a big camp of Cheyennes, and these eagles, staked out near this young man's lodge, used

¹ See "Prophets or Seers," p. 203.



War-bonnet, Cheyenne, early 1900s

to make a good deal of noise whistling, as eagles do. This young man was well-to-do, and had a large, fine lodge. The eagles were tied behind it, able to fly only the length of their ropes. One day the young man was sitting in his lodge when he heard eagles whistling up in the air. He went out and looked up, and saw many eagles flying about, high above his lodge, and whistling, as if calling to their young. The young birds

in the camp were excited, and kept flying and whistling, and at last, as they flew backward and forward, the ropes became loosened from their feet and they escaped, and flew upward toward the others. As the young man watched the eagles flying, his hands began to move up and down, and to flap like wings, and presently he began to move upward, flying toward the eagles. He kept going higher and higher, until at

last he disappeared. The young man was never seen again.

The bald eagle is the strongest bird that flies. Once a young buffalo-calf was found in a bald eagle's nest. The eagle must have carried it thither, which shows its great strength.

Owing to the protective power of the bird, a man wearing a war-bonnet of gray-eagle feathers believed that he would not be hit by either bullets or arrows. These bonnets were worn, therefore, not merely because they made a man look fine, but for protection as well. Some men, however, would not wear war-bonnets, because they made one conspicuous; and the enemy was more likely to shoot at a man wearing a war-bonnet than at one without the decoration. War whistles were often made from wing-bones of eagles.

OTHER BIRDS

Another bird that possesses strong power to keep one from being hit in battle is the blue hawk—perhaps the duck hawk. Small swift hawks—sparrow-hawks—possess protective power. The belief seems to be founded on their swiftness and activity.

A famous example of the protective power of this hawk is cited in the well-known case of old Whirlwind (died 1891), who in the celebrated fight with the Sauk and Fox² had every feather of his war-bonnet shot away, but was not himself hit, nor was the hawk on his war-bonnet touched.

The little prairie owls are believed also to have protective power and the Contraries wear them on the head. The night owl was a great medicine helper, especially strong in matters connected with lightning. Owl-feathers were worn on the head and on the arms, giving to the wearer certain powers possessed by the owl, as silence in moving about and the power to see at night.

Woodpeckers likewise possessed great powers. Parts of their bodies were used in the ceremony of the Medicine Lodge, and their feathers were often worn as helpful talismans and ornamented war-charms and war-clubs. They were much used on war implements, not merely because they were pretty, but because of the bird's spiritual power. This power had, perhaps, some relation to the birds' life in trees and hence indirectly to growing vegetation.



Two Moon

According to the Cheyenne small boys, the meadow-larks, when they return in spring, say in their whistling, *Wit ān i' yobe nān hē' ūbkt*, meaning, "I have come from Tallow River" (South Platte River).

The sandhill crane was also believed to possess strong protective power. As before remarked, its feathers and the skin of the head were used as ornaments for shields. The heads were fastened on the center of the shield. A long time ago a man dreamed about the cranes, the dream telling him that when he went into a fight he should imitate their cry. It was generally believed that if in a fight a man imitated the call of a sandhill crane, he would not be hit by a bullet. Carrying out the same idea of the crane's protective power, war-whistles were often made from the wing-bones of the crane. This bird was believed to take pity

² *The Fighting Cheyennes*, p. 99.

on everybody. It also had special power in matters connected with lightning.

They consider the chickadee (*Penthestes*) a meat-eater. The chickadee is called "the bird that tells us that summer is coming." It is a wise bird and knows that summer is coming, and it goes about and tells the people. Its cry is *mehnew'*, with a rising inflection. The Cheyennes would say, *mehaniw'*; that is "summer is coming." The chickadee's name has thus precisely the same meaning as with the Blackfeet.

Sometimes a magpie would fly up close to where men sat, and would alight on a tree, and make a noise, talking. If anyone in the party understood the speech of the bird, he would say to the rest: "Now, watch this bird. Whichever way he flies, from that direction enemies are coming."

In the old days, sometimes when the buffalo had disappeared a raven would come to the camp, and fly over it calling, and would say to the people: "Now watch me, and the direction in which I go. Follow me, and you will find buffalo close by."

LIZARDS, AMPHIBIANS, AND INSECTS

The little, quick-moving lizards seen among the rocks were helpers. Figures of them cut from rawhide were frequently worn to bring good luck, and quite generally in the Medicine Lodge. A man who was enduring suffering to pay a vow or to obtain power, was likely to wear one of these figures. They were made by medicine men, and sold, or given away. The Cheyennes did not like to kill these little lizards, and if by accident a man did so, he made some little gift to it as a propitiatory offering. Perhaps before going away he would tie a bit of red string about its neck. This lizard typifies activity and swift motion. It is never long quiet. It is a powerful war-charm and gives courage to one who wears its image, the power to get about quickly and to avoid arrows and bullets.

The little deerskin charms containing the dried fragments of the umbilical cord, and tied to the clothing of children up to the age of six or seven years, often have the shape of a lizard or a turtle. This charm has wide currency. It is common to the Sioux, Cheyennes, and Arapahoes, and more than a hundred years ago Mackenzie observed the same thing among the Chipewyans in the North. He says, "The women have a singular custom of cutting off a small piece of the navel string of newborn children, which they hang about the neck. They close it in a case made of

buckskin, which they decorate with porcupine quills and beads."³

Newts, water-dogs, or mud-puppies, have power, too. If a person has leg-ache, and sets his bare foot on one, he will be cured. Women greatly fear these animals, however, dreading lest they get hold of the skin of the breast and draw it all into their bodies. Almost exactly the same fear exists among Blackfeet women. Nevertheless, a woman may kill one of them, and taking her little child up to it, may cause the child to put its bare foot on the animal, in order to cure leg-ache. Sometimes, with the same purpose, the figure of a lizard or a newt may be sketched with charcoal on the sole of the foot.

In old times, when there were buffalo, the Indians sometimes captured the great black prairie cricket, and asked it where they should go to find buffalo. The cricket was held lightly in the hand and, after it had become quiet, the direction in which its antennae pointed was noted; and usually, by following that direction, buffalo were found. If one antenna was pointed backward, this indicated that in that direction there were a few buffalo. The belief in this sign is still held by some of the Indians.

Two other sorts of insects are frequently tied to the hair for charms in war—the dragonfly and the butterfly. The butterfly is used because it is light and irregular in flight; it makes the person wearing it light and active. The dragonfly, called whirlwind (*tē wō witūs' ?*), because it makes a little whirlwind though it is not seen in the whirlwind, only the dust being visible—will make the man wearing it hard to see and hard to hit. Neither of these creatures is ever long motionless. Both typify swiftness and activity, and give the wearer ability to move about swiftly, and to escape bullets and arrows. Both are painted on shields. Some men when going into battle paint on their bodies the figure of a dragonfly. The war-bonnet worn by Roman Nose, who was killed in the Beecher Island fight (1868), had dragonflies painted all down the strips of buffalo hide that supported the feathers.

WHITE BUFFALO

Though they were extremely rare, nevertheless white buffalo sometimes occurred in the herds that formerly

³ Alexander Mackenzie, *Voyages from Montreal, on the River St. Lawrence, through the Continent of North America*, 1801, p. CXXII.

covered the plains. Yet they were so unusual that although the Plains Indians spent most of their lives hunting the buffalo, on which they lived, very few men have seen more than two or three white buffalo.

The Cheyennes regard a white buffalo as mysterious (sacred). Some of them say that the white buffalo belongs far to the north; that it comes from the place where, according to tradition, the buffalo originally came out of the ground. They regard it as the chief of the buffalo. This feeling was confirmed by an observation made many years ago. A war-party went up north against the Crows. One day they came to a hill, and when they looked over it they saw great numbers of buffalo, lying down, and among them a perfectly white cow. When the buffalo got up and went to water, the white cow went too, and it was noticed that none of the other buffalo went very close to her. They did not seem to fear her, but they did not crowd upon her, but gave her plenty of room, as if they respected her.

If a Cheyenne man killed a white buffalo, he left it where it fell—taking nothing from it, not even putting a knife into it—and at once set out to look for some old man who possessed the needed spiritual power. If the buffalo had been killed with a gun, the man who was to perform the ceremony over it must have killed an enemy with a gun. If it had been killed with an arrow, the man to perform the ceremony must have killed an enemy with an arrow.

Ceremony of Removing the Hide

When the proper person had been found and brought to where the white buffalo lay, those who had gathered there moved the carcass until its head faced the east, and then rolled it over and propped it up on its knees and belly. The man who had killed it then pulled a tuft of hair first from the right shoulder and dropped it on the ground; then he pulled hair from the right rump, then from the left rump, from the left shoulder, and from the withers.

After this had been done, the men took hold of the body, and, after making four motions, turned it over on its back, rolling the carcass toward the north. It was then disemboweled and skinned. The skin of the head must be taken off by a man who had counted coup on and had scalped an enemy. The meat was left on the ground.

The hide was taken to camp with appropriate ceremonies. The skin might be placed on the horse

which was to carry it only by a man who in battle had taken a captive and carried him off on his horse. If such a man could not be found, then the hide might be placed on the horse by a man who in battle had picked up some dismounted friend or fellow tribesman and carried him off on his horse to safety.

The owner of the hide walked back to camp, leading the horse which bore it. When the company reached the village, the hide was to be taken off the horse by some man who had pulled an enemy from his horse, and, finally, some man who had counted a coup inside an enemy's lodge carried the white buffalo hide into the owner's lodge, and, passing to the left of the fire, placed the skin on the ground behind the fire.

Ceremony of Tanning the Hide

The crier was now sent through the village to shout an invitation to all the men who had counted more than one coup to assemble at the lodge where the hide was. After they had entered the lodge and were sitting all about it, the woman entered who was to dress the hide. She passed around behind the fire, and sat down behind the buffalo-hide. She dropped her dress to the waist, while the master of the ceremony painted her whole trunk to the waist with white clay paint. He wiped off the paint from a circle on her chest to represent the sun or the morning star, and from a crescent on her back, over the right shoulder blade; then, drawing his hands down over the body, he made vertical stripes on the white paint with his finger nails. At the woman's waist, in front, was tied a small bundle of white sage, and similar bundles were tied over each hip—over each kidney—while to the hair behind each ear a bunch was tied which stuck up like a little horn on either side.

After its blade had been rubbed over with charcoal, a knife was handed to the woman. She held the knife with the forearm horizontal, and the blade pointing upward. The man sitting next the door on the left side of the circle related the various coups he had counted, and at each coup recounted the woman cut a hole in the border of the hide for a pin to pass through in stretching it.

The man next in the circle then counted his coups, and for each coup recited the woman cut one hole in the margin of the hide, and so the counts went about the circle. About the head five holes were necessary, and in the head only a single hole could be cut for

each man who spoke, no matter how many his coups.

After a sufficient number of holes had been cut, the woman began to flesh the hide, but only about its border. As she took off each piece of flesh, a coup was counted for it, one coup by each man on each piece, beginning again at the left of the circle.

After the border of the hide had been fleshed, a man who had dragged an enemy out from a lodge took up the hide, and, counting a coup on it before he left the lodge, carried it outside. The woman then took the skin to the center of the camp and spread it out. The men went with her, and the skin was laid on the ground flesh-side up and spread out with its head toward the east. Beginning at the right shoulder, facing the east, a warrior counted a coup, and the woman drove a pin through a hole in the border of the hide at this point. Then she moved to the right hip, then to the left hip and the left shoulder, and finally back to the root of the tail. At each of these points a coup was counted on a pin, which was driven through a hole in the margin of the hide for its preliminary stretching. Thus five of these pins were driven and five coups counted. The woman then drove the rest of the pins and stretched the hide in the usual manner, without further ceremony. When this had been done, she took the flesher and, when ready to begin the work of fleshing, a man who had captured a female enemy in a fight counted his coup, and the woman fleshed the hide.

Later, when the hide was to be thinned down, another man counted a coup before the work of thinning began, and when the robe was ready for tanning a man was called who had been on a successful war-party which had returned without losing a man. He counted a coup over the hide, and when he had done so the work of dressing it began. The ceremony was performed with deliberation, and occupied a whole day. All this work was done in the presence of old men who possessed spiritual power. They sat about and watched it, to see that everything was in accordance with the prescribed fashion.

Offering the Hide to the Sun

In old times the hide of a white buffalo was not used, but was sacrificed to the Sun or to the Great Power (*Heammawibio*). Such an offering has been made within sixty years; and a story of the sacrifice was told me by Bent, as he witnessed it. He said:

“In 1867 I happened to come into Eagle Chief’s camp just after a white buffalo had been killed. The man who had killed it came in with the hide tied on his horse; he rode into the center of the camp-circle, stopped there, and dismounted. He did not take the hide off his horse, but stood there in the center of the circle holding his horse. The Indians began to look through the camp for some one who might take the hide from the horse with the prescribed ceremony. This could be done only by a man who had counted a coup by pulling an enemy off his horse in battle. Presently Left Hand, an Arapaho, came up carrying a stick in his right hand. He stopped by the horse, pointed with the stick in the direction of the place where the event had taken place, and then told how he had seen a Ute coming, had stepped behind a tree and waited until the Ute rode by him, and then had sprung upon him, pulled him from his horse and killed him with a knife. Then he struck the white buffalo-hide with his stick, and took it from the horse and placed it on the ground, where it remained. The man who had killed it had brought in no meat, for the carcass of a white buffalo may not be eaten; it must be left on the ground. If the meat were eaten, the buffalo might never again return to that place.

“The next day a pole was set in the ground to which the white hide was to be tied. Before this was done a very large sweat-house was built, and many of the old men went in to take a sweat and pray.

“Before they went in, women came in crowds, bringing their children, and various offerings—calico, beads, moccasins, and other gifts—which were to be tied to the pole and given to the sun. Before it was folded up to be tied to the pole, the hide was painted on the hair side with blue paint. The folded hide was tied to the pole by an old man who was naked, and was painted. While he was tying the hide to the pole he was constantly praying, and as each child was brought to him with an offering he prayed, passing his hands over its head, arms, and sides, and asking for good luck for it, for long life, health, and abundance of everything. Other old men stood about the man who was tying the hide, praying fervently.”





Black Ree

SACRIFICE

AMONG the Cheyennes, just as among all people, civilized and savage, the belief prevailed that personal suffering was acceptable to the supernatural powers, and would be likely to secure their favor. In times of difficulty and danger a vow or promise was often made that, if the higher power would give help, the individual would offer some sacrifice or perform some ceremony. To make such a pledge and to fail to carry it out was a serious fault, one certain to be followed by misfortune. The promise ought to be performed with reasonable promptness. If, for example, a man in the autumn pledged himself to make a medicine lodge, this lodge should be made during the following summer and not a year later. In 1903 a Southern Cheyenne named Turtle pledged himself to make a large sweat-house and to offer to the Great Power a painted cloth. He had made the vow to bring about the recovery of his elder son, who was very ill. The boy recovered, but up to the end of 1905 the pledge had not been fulfilled. Two years had elapsed and Turtle had not paid his vow! Meantime, both his sons died, one in the winter of 1904 and the younger one about November 1, 1905. It was generally believed that these deaths took place because Turtle had not fulfilled his obligation, and that unless he did so something bad would happen to him or to his wife.

In 1858, while a member of a war-party against the Pawnees, Mad Wolf, a Southern Cheyenne, who died not long ago, pledged himself to renew the medicine arrows. No enemies were found on this war journey; the party was not successful, and on his return to the camp Mad Wolf did not renew the arrows. Until he had done so no one would go to war in his company and he was not allowed to join any war-party. It was felt that the failure to fulfill his pledge would bring bad luck on himself and probably on the other members of the party—he had become a dangerous companion. After vainly trying to join three or four different war-parties, Mad Wolf carried out his pledge, and renewed the arrows.

In the offerings of the body, some sacrifices were made without ceremony, while others were accompanied by a certain ritual. Women quite often cut off joints of their fingers in sacrifice for the recovery of a sick husband or child, and with no ceremony beyond the usual prayer by a priest. Medicine Woman, formerly the wife of Wolf Chief, when one of her

children was sick, promised to sacrifice to the sun the terminal joint of the little finger of her right hand, if the child should get well. It recovered, and at the proper time Medicine Woman went to a priest, who raised her right hand to the sun, made a prayer, and then, with a sharp knife, cut off the joint.

As already explained, men going to war often sacrificed bits of their skin or flesh, at the same time praying for success in their undertaking. On a war journey in 1866, in which about eighty Southern Cheyennes took part, Eagle Head, the pipe bearer, made a vow that every man in the party should have a piece of skin cut from his arm, in order that all might have good fortune and secure a scalp without injury to anyone. The pledge was made while they were on the march, and Eagle Head stopped and announced it.

That evening, after they had camped, a sweat-house was built, a little mound of earth heaped up before it, and a buffalo-skull leaned against this. Each man then came forward and had one or more pieces of skin cut from his arm. The line where the skin was to be cut was marked with a bit of charcoal from the fire. Big Wolf cut away the skin, held the piece toward the sun, and then with a prayer put the skin under the buffalo-skull. To cut the skin, a bit of sharpened tin was used; in earlier times a flint was employed. A knife was not used.

In this ceremony each man decided for himself and announced how many pieces of skin he wished cut from his arm. One man in this party had two pieces taken from each arm. Two well-known men of this party—Red Moon and Tejon—objected to having this done, but were told that the promise had been made, and that they must either make the sacrifice or leave the party and go back. To have declined to have a part in the sacrifice would have brought ill fortune. After the sacrifice had been made all the older men took a sweat.

Two days afterward, on Smoky Hill River, a Kaw Indian was met, killed, and scalped, and the party returned successful, with faces blackened, showing that a scalp had been taken without loss of life to the party.

In the prayers which accompanied these various sacrifices mention was often made of the gristle rope which was sometimes used, and of the four ridges. The gristle rope means a rawhide rope often braided, but in old days sometimes a mere flat softened rawhide line cut from the hide of a buffalo or even from

the hide of a horse. Such ropes were commonly used by men who felt obliged to pay their vows by swinging to the pole, and the same ropes were used over and over again by different persons in the payment of such vows. I have no doubt that in time they acquired a certain sacred character of their own which made them more desirable for these purposes than an unused rope would have been. They were readily lent by their owners to other people who wished to use them in sacrifice.

The four ridges referred to represented four trials, four sacrifices to be made, which were the performance of important ceremonies. It was believed that the Great Power would be pleased with one who should go through four such ceremonies, and one who wished to obtain the special favor of the Great Power might strive to cross these four ridges—to perform these four difficult ceremonies during his life. There was no special order in which the four ridges were to be crossed, nor need the four ceremonies always be the same. We may conceive that a man who had passed through all the mysteries of the Medicine Lodge was thought to have crossed one of the ridges. The unwrapping of the medicine arrows might be another, going through the *Massaum* ceremony still another, and so on through several difficult and important trials. One who wished to acquire great spiritual power might make an effort to pass one of the ridges each year for four years; but it is to be understood that the passage of one of these ridges called for much physical effort and was very costly.

It was felt that persons who had been through the important ceremonies—as Medicine Lodge makers, those who have taken part in the *Massaum* ceremonies, and others—should be treated respectfully, even reverently, by all. They must not be addressed flipantly, nor should jokes be made about them or at their expense. They on their part should be dignified. They were not expected to hold aloof from others, but their conduct should show that they felt the responsibility of their position. If they were joked with or treated with slight respect, they made a little prayer to the Great Father—*Heammawibio*.

FASTINGS FOR A VISION

In old times, young men used to go off on the hills and fast for four nights. This was called a *wū wūn'*, starving. They did this in order that they might be fortunate, and might not be hit in battle. When they

slept, they lay on their faces, with their head toward the east; they had no shelter and no covering. They might smoke three times each day—at sunrise, at noon, and at the going down of the sun.

The young man might ask an instructor to take him up on a high hill, on the right-hand side of a river; that is to say, either on the south or the west side; or to a point of rocks on the right-hand side of a lake. The young man must lie there for four days without eating or drinking. Usually such young men took up with them white sage, to lie on as a bed, and a filled pipe. Sometimes, if the sun was very hot, the man stuck a bush in the ground to give him a little shade. Usually he made an offering to *Heammawibio*, which he left there when he went away from the spot. These votaries did not choose places which were especially dangerous, but went to the tops of hills, open to the view, from which they could see off over the prairie.

If the dreams which a man had during this ordeal were favorable, he usually remained for four days; but if unfavorable, he was likely to stop and to return to the camp. If he fasted to the end, after four days the old man went to him and brought him down to the camp. They did this only in summer. This is said to have been purely a sacrifice, and not an attempt to dream for power; but often those who lay there did have dreams, and what they dreamed surely came to pass. If the *maiyun* came to the man and talked to him, and smoked the pipe, he would be successful. Not everyone starved, and to only a part of those who starved did the vision come.

Old Whirlwind, as a young man, sleeping on a high hill for four nights, without food or drink, had a vision in which he saw himself, but with gray hair. This was a sign to him that he should live until he was old—until his hair was gray. He did live until his hair turned gray, and died an old man. He was in the Sauk and Fox fight, and was in great danger there.

DRAGGING SKULLS

Sometimes in the day a young man might have several buffalo-skulls attached to slits cut in the skin of the back, over the shoulder blades, and drag the skulls up and down over the course where he walked. This was sometimes done at the camp, and after the circle of the lodges had been put up the young man might start at the opening of and within the circle, and go all around the circle to the point from which he had



Fulfilling a vow to drag a buffalo-skull, unknown Cheyennes

started. There the old man awaited him, and took off the skulls, which were placed in line in the opening of the circle, facing inward. In taking off the skulls, the drawn-out skin was cut off, and the old man held each piece to the sun, and down to the ground, and toward the four directions, and then buried it in the ground. This might be done at any time when the young man wished to pay his vow. Often it was done at the time of the Medicine Lodge, but might be done at any time.

STANDING IN PLACE

Sometimes a young man might take a buffalo-skull to the top of a hill, and from sunrise to sunset stand on it without eating or drinking, all the time looking at the sun. Sometimes, toward evening, friends would go up to the place to bring him down to the camp, and would find him so stiff from standing on the skull all day in one position that he could hardly move. When he did this, he stood facing the east in the morning, and turned, following the sun until it disappeared in the west.

A young man might ask an old man if he knew how to stand in the water. The old man, if he assented, took him to a stream, and led him into the water until it was about up to his chest, and there he must stand all night. While standing there, the man might see

some good sign, or something that was bad. If what he saw portended evil, he usually gave up, and left the water.

SWINGING TO THE POLE

In another form of personal sacrifice the suffering was more acute, though shorter lived. The following detail of the operation of swinging to the pole alone in the hills was given me by *Wih'rokis*, Little White Man, formerly called *Wikisinis'to*, Bird That Calls (utters a cry).

He was then a young man, and his first child, a little baby, was very sick. In order to save the infant's life he determined to make a sacrifice. While considering what form this sacrifice should take, he saw in dreams persons standing up and swinging to the pole, and when at length he was convinced that this was what he was directed to do, he still hesitated for some time before making up his mind to act. Yet he kept thinking he saw a person swinging to a pole, and even when awake and moving about he used to see this. Finally another dream led him to decide. The person who appeared to him in the dream said to him that if he made this sacrifice his child would recover.

Bird That Calls now summoned two older men to advise him. These were Black Whetstone (*Möbktä'vehütse'hē*) and Wounded Eye (*Hē'ēkā'itstābē*).

He told them what he had seen, and said that he was obliged to undergo this suffering and that they must teach him how to do it. He offered them the pipe, requesting them to help him, and they accepted it, thus promising their assistance.

The afternoon before the sacrifice was to be made, Black Whetstone and Wounded Eye took Little White Man out to cut the pole to which he was to be tied. When a young cottonwood tree, suitable for a pole, was found, they grasped his arms and caused him to move his hands four times toward the tree, as if cutting it with an axe. Then he cut down the pole without further ceremony.

They now caused him to pick it up from the ground, making four motions before lifting it and then four motions before dragging it away to the place chosen for the sacrifice. When the place was reached, the instructors showed him how to dig the hole in which it was to stand, making four preliminary motions before actually beginning to dig the hole. The pole was not trimmed; the leaves and branches were left on it.

That night after the three had reached camp, a messenger was sent about the camp to find and borrow two braided rawhide riatas. Two were required because he had two instructors. If there had been a single instructor, only one rope would have been needed. Next morning the three men arose very early, and long before daylight each instructor took one of the ropes and rubbed his hands down over its whole length four times. Then a coal was taken from the fire, sweet grass sprinkled on it and each rope was passed four times through the smoke. Then to one end of each rope were tied two deerskin strings, each seven or eight inches long. Each rope was now doubled into a ball in the middle, leaving the end to which the strings were tied—to be attached to the skewers in his body—four or five feet long, and the other end—to be tied to the pole—somewhat longer. The ropes were now put aside, and thereafter no one might touch them except Bird That Calls.

Just before daylight the instructors painted him with white clay over the whole body. After he had been painted, they caused him to sit, and filled and lighted a pipe, and offered it to him four times, and each time he smoked. The pipe was held to his mouth; he did not touch it with his hands.

After he had smoked, the instructors told him that the direction to perform this sacrifice was the greatest favor that he could have received—the privilege

to stand on a hill where all (the powers) might look at him, and to stand by a pole in the sun's road where the sun could look down and see him. It might be a hard trial, but he must not give up. When the sun rose he should look at it until it reached the middle—the zenith—and when it passed the middle he should not give up, but should watch it until it disappeared.

After he had received this instruction, he set out with the two older men to go to the place where the pole was. He had expected to walk out there barefoot, but it chanced that among his gifts to his instructors were some moccasins, and for this reason he had the right to wear moccasins in going out. When they set out, he walked in advance, wrapped in a buffalo robe and carrying the two ropes. The instructors followed.

When they reached the place where the pole was, Bird That Calls sat down near the pole and facing it, and the instructors sat behind him and filled a pipe. Before lighting the pipe they pointed it to the four directions and prayed. They smoked and waited before setting up the pole until the sun just began to peep over the hills. While waiting the two instructors tied the two ropes to the pole, each one giving the other a small present to pay him for tying the rope.

The instructors said to him, "You must watch the sun, and before it gets up too high must raise the pole."



Removing the skewers that held the rope



When the sun began to rise above the horizon, Bird That Calls planted the pole, while the instructors prayed and asked the sun to look upon this pole. "Whoever it was that directed this man to do this, let him see that now he is doing it. Let this man have good luck, and let all his children be fortunate. We have the tree standing in your gristle rope. It has never been broken. Let this man live long until he has crossed the four ridges."

South of the pole, and facing southward, was placed a buffalo skull; on each side of the pole, east and west, stood two buffalo chips, each four steps and a half step (12 or 14 feet), from it, and south of each of these chips was another. These chips represented guards, or watchers, to observe the man and see that he did his duty. Buffalo chips were not always available, but if they were not to be had, large stones might be used in place of them. In the arc of a circle south of the pole—the pole being the circle's center—was spread a bed of white sage for him to walk on.

It was now time for him to be pierced. He knelt, sitting back on his heels, and rested his hands on his knees, opposite to and facing the pole. The instructors knelt at his right side and with charcoal marked upright parallel lines on the skin on the right breast to indicate where the knife should enter and where come out. Then one instructor took the skin in his fingers above the marks and the other below the marks, and pinching up the skin they thrust in the knife at the marked place on the right, and it came through at the marked place on the other side. Before using the knife, it had been rubbed down with a piece of charcoal. The left breast was pierced in the same way, the instructors passing behind the novice, but in this case the knife was thrust into the skin of the left breast from right to left, as it had been on the right side, and not from left to right. This was done because a single knife was used for the two piercings. If two knives had been used, the second might have been inserted from left to right.

When the right breast was pierced, the instructors, assisting each other, passed a small straight stick, the length of a finger, through the slit, and to this skewer tied the strings on one of the ropes. After the left breast was pierced a similar skewer was passed through that slit and tied.

After the strings had been tied, the instructors raised Bird That Calls to his feet and supported and directed him as he walked over to the middle of the

sage-covered path. Then the instructors pulled four times on his breast to straighten out the ropes. They moved his body toward the east and then toward the west; again toward the east and again toward the west—four times. Then they took hold of his right leg and moved it four times forward, and at the fourth movement he began to walk to the west end of the sage-covered trail, and from there back to its east end, and back again—going forth and back until the sun had set. It seemed to him to take the sun a long time to reach the middle, but the time from the middle to the sun's setting was much longer. He was constantly trying to break loose, but the skin of his breast did not break; it only stretched. He had the privilege of resting four times—in the middle of the forenoon, at noon, in the middle of the afternoon, and just before sunset. At each of these rests he might smoke a pipe. He rested but once—at midday.

As soon as he had begun to walk, the instructors left him and were absent all day, intending to return to him just as the sun set. When they left him, they said, "When we return for you at sunset, try to be as near as you can to the place from which we raised you up, but do not sit down until we come to you and push you down."

During the day the instructors built a sweat-house in the camp. At sundown, when the instructors reached him again, they grasped his arms, one on each side, and pushed him down to a sitting position. They cut through the stretched hide of his breast, took him back to camp, and entered the sweat-lodge with him, some other men who had made this sacrifice also going into it. His wounds and the blood on his body were wiped off with white sage. That night, when he ate, no one might eat with him except men who had experienced this suffering. On each of the three following days he took a sweat, and on the fourth day the ceremony was finished. He was told that thereafter, if he wished to teach men how to undergo this penance, he might teach four persons and no more.

In taking a ceremonial sweat, the man is thought for the time being to give over his whole body and spirit to the great power. Then when he leaves the sweat-house, and his body has been wiped off with white sage—the male sagebrush (*hētānēwānūtš'*)—his body again belongs to himself. *Wik'isinis'to* gave his instructors a horse, a gun, a suit of deer-skin clothing, moccasins, and blankets. His child got better the next morning.

THE MEDICINE ARROWS AND SACRED HAT

THE Cheyenne have two great mysteries—the medicine arrows and the sacred hat. These came to them long, long ago, brought by their culture heroes, and have always remained their most sacred and most cherished possessions. They were a spiritual protection to the tribe, talismans given them by the Creator to help the people to health, long life, and plenty in time of peace, and in time of war to protect and strengthen them and give them victory over their enemies. So long as due reverence was paid to these relics, and the ceremonies were performed which the culture heroes had been taught and had told them must be practiced, the influence of these protective gifts was beneficial and helpful, but failure properly to respect them was certain to be followed by misfortune to the tribe.

THE MEDICINE ARROWS

It is believed that the arrows (*Mabuts*) belonged particularly to the Tsistsistas, or Cheyenne proper, while the sacred hat belonged originally to the Suhtai. The arrows were therefore received by Sweet Medicine, while the sacred hat was received by Standing On The Ground. Some of the stories declare that these two heroes were in the sacred lodge of the *maiyun* at the same time and received the two tribal “medicines” and the instructions concerning them at the same time. Other accounts declare that Standing On The Ground brought out the hat from the spring called Old Woman’s Water at the same time that the buffalo and the corn were received.

The arrows were a medicine for the men alone—women might not look at them. The hat was chiefly for women. Both were strong war medicines.

The arrows are sometimes referred to as the first the Cheyenne ever saw—the models from which all subsequent arrows were made—but this is not the case. The medicine arrows appear rather to typify subsistence and defense. Two of them, called “buffalo arrows,” represented food, because it was by arrows that they procured food—the flesh of animals. The other two were called “man arrows” and represented war—perhaps victory over their enemies, perhaps only a means of attacking their enemies. The hat more directly representing food—and called *Īs’ sī wūn*, buf-

falo—had to do with the immediate things of the camp, food, health, clothing, and shelter.

The shafts of these arrows are like those of ordinary arrows. The heads are of stone and small. The wood of the arrows does not appear to be that commonly used for this purpose—the cornel or dogwood. Arrows when kept tied up for a long time usually become bent and warped, but the Pawnee, who have had two of these arrows in their possession for eighty years, declare that they have not become bent.

The shafts and heads of the arrows are supposed to be the ones that were originally brought by the culture hero but the feathers and the sinews have been frequently renewed. The buffalo arrow-shafts were painted red, while the man arrow-shafts were black. The man arrows were feathered with the tail feathers of the war eagle and the buffalo arrows with the tail feathers of the gray eagle, the young of the bald eagle.

The arrows were in charge of a certain especially appointed man, and it was the duty of his wife to carry them according to the ritual received by Sweet Medicine, from the spirits, the Listeners Above (*Hea'mma māiyūn' tsiā' stomūni*) and the Listeners Under The Ground (*Astu'no māiyūn' tsiā' stomūni*).

The keeper of the medicine arrows from his charge of this most important mystery was in a sense the director of the tribe’s affairs. The office belonged to a special family. If the keeper of the arrows died, his younger brother took them or his son—if old enough—and again the brother or son of this man. The present keeper is Little Man, the cousin of Black Hairy Dog, his predecessor. Black Hairy Dog received them from his father, Stone Forehead, who, from his office, was called by the whites Medicine Arrow. He was preceded by Lame Medicine Man and he, by Elk River, while White Thunder was the keeper of the arrows in 1830—and nobody knows how long before—and until his death. He is the earliest arrow keeper known, but in traditions telling of a move of the arrows against the Shoshone, which is believed to have taken place in 1817, mention is made of a man named Dog Faced Medicine Man, who may perhaps have been the arrow keeper at that time.

RENEWING OF THE ARROWS

The renewing of the medicine arrows was perhaps the most solemn religious ceremony the Cheyenne knew. The operation consisted in taking the points from

the arrows, replacing them with fresh windings, and renewing the feathers. This ceremony was sometimes performed to prevent anticipated evil, sometimes to put an end to a present misfortune, and sometimes as an atonement or sacrifice. If the Cheyenne were engaged in wars and many of their people were being killed, or, if a man of the tribe had been killed by one of his fellows, the arrows were renewed. On such an occasion, when taken out and inspected the heads of the arrows were found to be bloody, or to be dotted with little specks of blood. Sometimes such marks were seen on the arrows when nothing of this kind had taken place, and in such a case the people knew, either that someone would be killed or else that a great sickness threatened the camp. A man in great danger might pledge himself to renew the arrows if he escaped, or, if badly wounded, he might promise to renew them if he recovered.

The ceremony did not occur with any regularity. It was not annual like the medicine lodge, but took place when occasion seemed to demand. The arrows might be renewed two or three times within a single year, or a year or more might elapse between the performances of the ceremony. It might take place at the request of a soldier band, or on the advice of priests, but the ceremony might not be performed without the consent of the keeper of the arrows.

When it had been determined that the medicine arrows should be renewed, runners were sent to each outlying camp to summon all the people to come together. Usually all were glad to obey, since the renewing of the arrows was for the general welfare and all wished to share the good influences exerted by the ceremony.¹ People not present at the renewing of the

¹ It is difficult to find a tradition of one who has refused to come to this gathering when summoned, yet about forty years ago Big Ribs, a famous man among the Southern Cheyenne declined to obey the summons of the soldiers. He had served as a scout with the white men and his faith in the protective power of the arrows had been shaken. Several times he was sent for and declined to obey, and at length one day he saw a body of soldiers coming toward his camp, and believed that they intended to use harsh measures. With rifle in hand he stepped out in front of his lodge and stopped the soldiers when they were yet at a distance. He called out to them saying they had already come for him a number of times, and that he did not intend to obey their orders. "There are many of you," he said, "and if you choose to come for me you can kill me, but you all know me. I have a number of shots in my gun and before you kill me I shall probably kill several of you. If you come toward me beyond

arrows were thought to be no longer under their favorable influence—no longer protected by them and so exposed to a variety of misfortunes.

When the arrows were to be renewed all of the people came together in a great gathering. The occasion was one of kindness and good feeling among them; feasting went on continually, and men, women, and children visited one another and renewed old friendships, while relatives saw their young kinsfolk whom they had never met before.

As the people drew together, the soldier bands that had charge of the ceremony ordered the pitching of the circle, with unusual care. In its center a shelter or shade was built as headquarters for the soldiers, and from these headquarters men were constantly moving about the camp to see that the inner circle was exact, that no lodges stood too far forward and that the largest lodges were pitched on the inner side of the circle. The outer border of the circle was unimportant and the lodges of any clan might extend out into the prairie. While the soldiers were riding about, attending to the forming of the camp circle, they were at liberty to shoot with an arrow any dog that they might care to. This they often did, choosing a fat young dog and having a feast.

While the work of renewing the arrows was going on everything in the camp was kept very quiet, and when the old feathers were about to be taken off soldiers passed about through the camp and obliged all persons to enter their lodges and remain there until this work had been done. However, women who were at a little distance from the camp down at the stream getting water, or working quite outside the camp, were not usually forced into their lodges.

This was an especially favorable time for practicing the healing art. Sweat lodges were built outside the circle and in them the sick were treated. Doctors renewed their supplies of roots and medicines, pulverizing and mixing their remedies during these four days. Medicines prepared during this time were believed to be stronger and more efficacious than those made at any other season. It was also a favorable time

that bush I shall begin to shoot." Big Ribs was known as one of the bravest men and greatest warriors among the Cheyenne, and the soldiers after consulting together turned back and did not trouble him further. He is said to be the only man that ever faced and frightened off a band of the Cheyenne soldiers.



Buffalo Calf (Calf)

for the renewal of shields, for painting them over again, putting on new feathers, and repairing them.

When the time had come for the renewal of the arrows, a large lodge, *Mā hē yūm*, formed of two ordinary lodges, was built in the center of the circle, the shade for the soldiers having been removed, and the bands having gone to their lodges in the circle. Sometimes the work was done in the lodge and sometimes out of doors. In any event only the arrow keeper and his assistants worked at them, though a lodge

full of men—old chiefs and men who had previously taken part in the ceremony—might be present.

The man who was to renew the arrows went to the lodge of the arrow keeper, who delivered to him the bundle of arrows wrapped in the skin of a coyote. He who had received it, accompanied by the members of his own soldier society, all of them praying and crying aloud for help, carried it to the center lodge and entered. A large buffalo chip had been placed at the back of the lodge, and this chip was covered with

stems of the white sage. The man very reverently and slowly put down the bundle on this bed.

Then, wearing his robe hair-side out and carrying a pipe, he turned about and left the lodge. Going through the village he offered this pipe to four old men that he had chosen—important men in the tribe, and especially good arrow makers and asked them to come with him and renew the arrows. When these old men had smoked and so had promised to do as he asked them, he returned to the lodge whither the old men soon followed him.

The man who was having the arrows renewed presented one or more horses to the arrow keeper, and to the men whom he asked to help him he presented a horse each, or perhaps a smaller present—a blanket or a robe—the value of the payment depending somewhat on his means.

The work done on the arrows was very fine—being the work of the best craftsmen. Such men took the responsibility of this work greatly to heart and believed that if anything went wrong—if a sinew broke or a feather slipped—it might bring them bad fortune. The sinew on the points extended three or four inches down on the shaft; it was whitened with white clay and it was put on so that the wrapping appeared white. While the arrows were being renewed, a man sat with a pile of sticks before him, and, as each operation was performed on the four arrows, he put aside four sticks to represent the completion of this particular operation on all four. These sticks when counted, are said to have been found to number 144, representing 36 operations.

The old men who were working at the arrows were naked and painted; and the man who had pledged himself to have the arrows renewed, also naked and painted, each foot resting on a large buffalo chip, squatted at the back of the lodge. He was obliged to remain in this posture all day long. It was extremely fatiguing. The work on the arrows was carried on at the back of the lodge, a little to the right of the fire.

The work of renewing the arrows occupied four days, and on the morning of the fifth day they were taken out and tied to a forked pole set in the ground, about fifty yards in front of the lodge in the center of the circle. They were not in a close bundle, but were tied a little across one another so that the point and feather of each arrow was plainly visible. The two buffalo arrows pointed upward and the two man arrows downward. Here they stood in the center of the camp, so that all the males might approach close to them

and look at them, but the women were not permitted to go near them.

It has been generally supposed by those who knew of the existence of the medicine arrows that these are still in the possession of the tribe. This, however, is not a fact. In the year 1830 the Pawnee captured these arrows from the Cheyenne and they still possess two of them. A number of aged men still alive had been told by their mothers that the arrows were captured by the Pawnee a certain number of years before they were born, and all the testimony seems to show that 1830 was the year of the capture. Elk River, who died no longer ago than 1909, had long been considered the oldest man among the Northern Cheyenne and was probably nearly or quite ninety years old. He could not fix for me the date of the capture, but declared that he was a boy big enough to go about alone with his bow and arrows when the event took place. He says that he was a big boy when Gray Thunder was killed, an event which happened in 1838.

But it is evident that the Cheyenne could not exist without medicine arrows. According to Elk River:

For the next two or four years many presents were taken into the lodge of the medicine arrows, many offerings made to the spirits (*mai-yun*) asking for help and protection. After these two or four years it was determined to renew the arrows—to make four new ones. The arrow keeper had four assistants, men who were connected with the medicine arrows and who helped him to care for them. One of these was named Gray Hair. When it was determined to make new arrows, Gray Hair was chosen to go out of the camp to search for sticks with which to make the shafts of these new arrows, stout shoots of the currant bush. He found these shoots and took them back to the arrow lodge which had been cleaned out and the floor covered with white sage. In the lodge were the presents.

Now began the manufacture of the four arrows, all the work being done with the same ceremony, care, and deliberation that ordinarily accompanied the renewing of the arrows. The four shoots brought in by Gray Hair, when they had been cut to the right length, were placed on a bed of white sage. The arrow makers worked over them very slowly, carefully, and reverently, scraping them and smoothing them with the smoothing stones until they were brought down to the right size and had become a little dry. Then very slowly and reverently the grooves were marked in them with four motions, making four zigzags. The

ordinary arrows have three grooves, but the medicine arrows have four. The glue used in attaching the feathers was made from the bones of a fish. Buffalo blood was used to color the shafts of the arrows. The black coloring was made by mixing the charcoal from coarse burned grass with blood.

To the making of these new arrows four days were devoted, as in the case of the renewing of the real arrows. Then, on the morning after the fourth night, the arrows were put outside as described, and all the males of the camp looked at them. The next morning after they were hung up over the door of the medicine arrow lodge, horizontally, the points of the arrows being directed toward the south.

I understand that it was after the Cheyenne had made the four new arrows that they recovered a single arrow from the Pawnee. Later, according to Elk River, the Burnt-thigh Sioux had a fight with the Pawnee and captured one of the medicine arrows. The Sioux sent word to the Cheyenne that they purposed to bring home to them one of the medicine arrows. When this was returned it was put with the other medicine arrows, making, with the arrow recovered from the Pawnee, six arrows in all. The arrow recovered directly from the Pawnee was, we are told, one of the buffalo arrows. That which came through the Sioux was one of the man arrows.

The Cheyenne now took two of the new medicine arrows and prepared to offer them as a sacrifice. Many gifts were brought into the arrow lodge, and after more or less ceremony the two arrows were wrapped up with this bundle of presents, and the bundle was taken up on a high butte in the Black Hills and deposited in a crevice of the rock. From time to time thereafter, as the Cheyenne passed through that country, someone would climb up to the place to look at these arrows. The bundle was there for a long time, but at length someone went up there and found that it had disappeared. There was nothing to show how the arrows had gone or when.

THE SACRED HAT

The sacred hat of the Cheyenne (*Issiwun*) is made of the skin of a buffalo cow's head; and a pair of buffalo cow horns shaved down, flattened, and somewhat decorated were, up to a few years ago, still attached to the hat.

Like the arrows, the hat was in the custody of a man, and by the old law the office was hereditary. For

the guardian of the hat they preferred a man who was brave, quiet, not talking much, and very little given to wandering about. The man who held the office was never killed or even wounded in war; nor was he ever sick, but lived to full age, dying at last nearly a hundred years old. His lodge had a sacred character, and in the old formal days certain rules were observed in it. The hat was kept in this lodge, usually in a sack of buffalo hide, on which the hair had been left, and trimmed about the border with the tails of buffalo. During the day, in fair weather, the bundle containing the hat was tied to two of the lodge poles, above and outside of the door, and at night it hung on a tripod by the head of the bed occupied by its keeper.

The hat, *Issiwun*, was shown only on the occasion of a great sickness, or when the medicine arrows were renewed, or when it was taken out to be worn in war. In the first case it was shown in the lodge, which was thrown open, the people entering from the south side, passing around and out at the north. The people passed between the hat and the lodge poles. The hat rested on a bed of white sage, on the middle one of a line of five buffalo chips. The whole floor of the lodge was sprinkled with pure white sand. As the people passed by the hat, they made their prayers and passed their hands over it, and then over their children.

In the old times, when the camp was moving, the wife of the keeper of the hat walked, carrying it on her back, for the hat might neither be carried on a horse nor hauled on a travois. When the camp stopped to rest and smoke, this woman also stopped and put down her load and rested, but she did not sit with the others, but off to one side. In later times, she who carried the hat sometimes rode.

When the lodge in which the hat was kept had once been pitched, it was not permitted to move it. If it was found necessary to move this lodge, then all the lodges must be taken down and the whole camp must pack up and move, even if the new location were not more than a few hundred yards away.

In the old times, when women saw a man going to the lodge of *Issiwun* to make a sacrifice, they used to gather together their little children and follow him thither. After the keeper of the hat had smoked the pipe brought him by the man who wished to make the sacrifice, and so had accepted the offerings for the hat, the man might stand in front of the lodge and the little children, being brought to him one by one, he would pass the offering four times over the child's right side from foot to shoulder, and four times over

its left side from foot to shoulder, and once over the head from in front backward. This would ward off all sickness from the child, would keep him well and strong and bring him good luck. After all of the children had been thus blessed, the offering was handed to the keeper of the hat, who might attach it to the bundle or might take it out and leave it on the hill as a sacrifice.

Misfortune came to the Cheyenne through the loss of the medicine arrows and in like manner trouble is believed to have come to them through lack of respect paid to the sacred hat.

For a long time, Half Bear had been the keeper of the hat, and, according to law, the office should have descended to Coal Bear, his son. At the time of Half Bear's death, however, Coal Bear was absent, and when Half Bear felt that he was dying he called to him his close friend, Broken Dish, whom he had been instructing in some of the mysteries of the hat, and said to Broken Dish, "I will not give you *Issiwun* to keep, but I will leave it to you to care for until my son returns." After Half Bear died, the camp moved and traveled toward the Little Big Horn river. Finally, the hat lodge was on the Little Big Horn and people began to gather in, and at last Coal Bear returned to the camp.

Some little time after his return, Coal Bear took four of his best horses, some buffalo robes, and arrows to Broken Dish to pay him for caring for the hat during the time he had had it. But Broken Dish was not ready to give it up. While the people were talking about taking the hat away from Broken Dish for Coal Bear, the wife of Broken Dish took one of the horns from the hat. The gifts were again taken to Broken Dish's lodge and Coal Bear asked for the hat, telling Broken Dish that the hat had not been given to him, but that Broken Dish had been asked by Half Bear to hang up the bundle in his lodge until Coal Bear should come for it. Broken Dish still refused to give it up.

Now the Fox soldiers were called together. They formed in line and, with the chiefs, marched to the lodge of Broken Dish—all of them crying. They took the hat and carried it to Coal Bear and gave it to him. He did not pay Broken Dish for keeping it, nor had Broken Dish paid Half Bear for the privilege of keeping the hat for Coal Bear. Half Bear died in the year 1869, the same winter in which Tall Bull was killed, therefore the hat probably came to Coal Bear in 1873, and he had it for twenty-three years, for he died

in 1896. From him the hat went to Wounded Eye. When Coal Bear received the hat, it was not known that a horn was gone from it. After the hat had been taken from Broken Dish, he broke camp and moved away and afterward lived with the Sioux. He never returned to the camp.

The wife of Broken Dish was sister of the wife of Dragging Otter, and, when all of Broken Dish's family died, the horn which had been removed went to the sister of the woman who had taken it. When this woman died, Dragging Otter retained it and on his death it passed into the hands of Three Fingers, the titular chief of the Southern Cheyenne, and finally was by him taken up north in 1908, and returned to Wounded Eye and presumably restored to the hat. For a long time before the death of Broken Dish's wife she carried this horn sewed inside the front of her dress, so that it was always on her person. It is said that, when the soldiers took the hat from Broken



Three Fingers

Dish, his wife was angry and she poured water from a cup on the floor of the lodge. Soon thereafter it began to rain and it rained hard all that day.

The loss of the horn was not discovered until the hat had been for some time in Coal Bear's custody. When what had occurred became known, it was deemed a great misfortune, and it was predicted that ill luck would follow the tribe, and especially the family of Broken Dish. Both predictions came true; the whole Broken Dish family soon died, the capture of a part of the Northern Cheyenne, their transfer to the southern country, and their flight to the north followed soon after the sacrilege: there was fighting and sickness and the wounding of people, and at last the outbreak of Dull Knife's party from Fort Robinson, where many men, women, and children were butchered. Almost all the Cheyenne troubles are believed to have followed close on the loss of their medicine arrows, and the desecration of the sacred hat.

Coal Bear died in 1896. I knew him well. He was a man of great force and of fine character. He bore himself as became the keeper of *Issiwun*. His burial was accompanied with the proper ceremony. The body was placed on the ground on a hill, and was covered with stones. About this pile of stones, at the four cardinal points, four buffalo skulls were placed on the ground. If this tribute were not paid to the keeper of *Issiwun*, it was believed that the buffalo would go away to the north—where they originally came from—and the range would be deserted. But, if this were done, there would always be plenty of buffalo in the country. When he died Coal Bear was not an old man, probably not more than sixty. His death at this early age is believed to have been due largely to the fact that the tribe no longer revered the hat as formerly.

The sack in which the hat was kept is said to have possessed a certain sacred power. This sack was called *Nim' hō yōh*, which means, "over the smoke," referring to the position that the bundle sometimes occupied, tied to a long pole resting against the back of the lodge, so that the sacred bundle actually hung over the smoke-hole.

Wounded Eye, the present keeper of the hat, before he received it was restless and disposed to move about, and to build a new house in each stopping place. Since he has received the cap, however, he has not built a house but has lived in a lodge, for this mystery may not be taken into a house, nor may it be carried on a wagon.

THE ARROWS AND HAT AS WAR MEDICINE

It has been said that the arrows and the hat were strong war medicines. On certain occasions, when some grave injury had been inflicted on the Cheyenne by another tribe, the whole camp, carrying the medicine arrows and the sacred hat, moved against its enemies, to seek revenge for the injury.

There are traditions that in the distant past there were several such tribal war expeditions, but nothing definite is known about them. In historic times there have been six such expeditions, one against the Crow, one against the Kiowa, two against the Pawnee, and two against the Shoshone. The formal moves of the arrows were made only on the pledge of some man or men who belonged to one of the soldier societies. If a man determined to pledge himself to move the arrows to war in revenge for an injury to the tribe, he caused it to be cried through the camp that the next year—after one winter—the tribe with the arrows should move against the enemy. The arrows could not be moved without such a warning.

It is a good commentary on the absolute lack of organization among Indians in general that in only two cases were these moves of the arrows successful (against the Crow in 1820 and against the Shoshone in 1843), while one expedition was fruitless (against the Shoshone in 1817), and three were unsuccessful (against the Pawnee in 1830 and 1853 and against the Kiowa and Comanche in 1838). In these three cases the Cheyenne were not under such discipline as to be willing to await the completion of the ceremonies of the arrows. They either made the charge before the ceremonies were completed or stole off in little bands to make an attack and do some brave thing. This course, according to Cheyenne belief, neutralized and made of no effect the spiritual power of the arrows.

These sacred things were taken to war only when the whole tribe, men, women, and children, moved. They were never carried on small war parties. Because they belonged to and influenced the whole tribe, the whole tribe must accompany them when they were carried to war.

When time had come for battle, a certain ceremony was performed, which was part of the ritual of these sacred objects and had for its purpose the confusing and alarming of the enemy. When they were about to make the charge, the arrow keeper took in his mouth a bit of the root, which is always tied

up with the arrows, chewed it fine, and then blew it from his mouth, first toward the four directions and finally toward the enemy. The blowing toward the enemy was believed to make them blind. After he had done this he took the arrows in his hand and danced, pointing them toward the enemy and thrusting them forward in time to the dancing: He stood with the left foot in front, and with this he stamped in time to the song and the motions. Drawn up in line behind the arrow keeper were all the men of the tribe, standing with the left foot forward as he stood, dancing as he danced, and making, with their lances, arrows, hatchets, or whatever weapons they might hold, the same motions that he made with the arrows. At each motion made by the arrow keeper, all the men who stood behind him gave the shout commonly uttered as they charged down on the enemy.

The first motion of the arrows by the arrow keeper is directed toward the (collective) enemy's foot, the second toward his leg from ankle to thigh, the third against his heart, and the fourth against his head. This is the song which the arrow keeper sings.

Ni' vā tsē ūs tsīn āts'

There you lie helpless

Tsē hīk' ī wōn ān' īs

Easily (to be) annihilated

After the arrow keeper had pointed the arrows four times in the direction of the enemy, he thrust them the fifth time toward the ground.

Meantime, all the women and girls had seated themselves on the ground behind the line of men and remained there turning their heads away or covering them with their robes, for they might not look at the arrows.

After the demonstration made against the enemy with the arrows, the young man who had been chosen to carry them into the fight went to the arrow keeper, who tied the arrows to the young man's lance. He who was to wear the sacred hat, *Issiwun*, took that up from the ground and put it on his head, securing it there by means of a string which passed under his chin. Then these two, riding a little ahead of the line of fighting men, rushed toward the enemy. These two men rode as the lodges stand. That is, the man who carried the arrows rode before the right of the line, and he who carried the hat before the left of the line. When these two, who were on specially chosen swift horses, had come close to the enemy, they rode forward and passed each other in front of the line and then passed

around behind it. The purpose of this is to blind, confuse, and frighten the enemy.

The protective power of the arrows, as has been already said, was exercised in a variety of ways. The following example given me by an English-speaking Indian may be repeated.

In 1875, thirty-three Cheyenne young men left the Southern Cheyenne agency at Darlington, I. T., to go north and join the hostile camp. With them went the keeper of the arrows, carrying them on his back. After a short time troops were sent after the Indians to overtake them and bring them back to the agency, but they had determined to fight rather than return. One day, as the Cheyenne were traveling along over the level prairie, a dust was seen behind them and presently those who were following were recognized to be soldiers. The horses of the Indians were in poor condition and they could not run away. The arrow keeper stopped and said, "We are certain to be overtaken. What may we do to save ourselves?" Presently he told his young men to dismount, sit down on the prairie, cover their heads with their robes or blankets, and look at the ground.

After the young men had all seated themselves on the prairie the arrow keeper put on his robe hair-side out and walked four times around the men and their horses praying. It is not known what he said. The soldiers came on toward them and passed within half a mile or so of the Indians, so close at all events that the sound of their passage could be heard. They paid no regard to the party, for all they saw were some buffalo lying down or feeding on the prairie. The Indians sat still and their horses stood by them, but to all seeming they were a bunch of buffalo. When the sound of the passing soldiers was heard, the Indians looked up and saw them and watched them until they had disappeared in the distance. When they had passed out of sight the Cheyenne mounted and went on their way, but, it is believed, while the soldiers were passing the arrow man had transformed the Indians into buffalo. This happened at about three o'clock in the afternoon. Edmund Guerrier was with the troops as interpreter.

The man who told me this was one of the fleeing Cheyenne. He said in concluding his story "I am educated and I am a Christian, but I must believe what I myself saw."



THE MEDICINE LODGE AND MASSAUM

THE Cheyennes have much ceremonial accompanied with extended and varied ritual. I have been present at many of these ceremonies, and have recorded what I saw and secured such explanation as I could. I have written at some length of the two great mysteries of the Cheyennes. The medicine arrows and the buffalo hat are the two cherished talismans handed down to protect the Cheyenne and the Suhtai, to give them health, long life, and plenty, and strength and courage to conquer their enemies. The ceremonies of renewing the arrows and of unwrapping the sacred hat are two of the most important practiced by the tribe. The ceremonies of the Medicine Lodge and of the *Massaum* are others of great importance. These four sacred performances stand out, I think, above all others of the Cheyennes.

THE MEDICINE LODGE

The midsummer ceremony that is commonly called the Medicine Lodge or Sun Dance¹ is one of the most important religious festivals known to the Plains Indians.² Where it exists, the Medicine Lodge celebrates the rebirth of life on the earth, the return of the season of growth. The Cheyenne call it "the renewing of the earth." The occasion, the time, and the place are sacred, and the ceremony is associated with certain sacrifices, the offering to the spiritual powers of acceptable gifts, accompanied by the purification which comes from the abstention from food and drink for a period of a few days.

In early times, and in certain places as late as 1875 or 1880, the most striking thing about the Medicine Lodge was the so-called torture, which most often took the form of swinging to the pole or dragging skulls. In this suffering the practice was for the man—in fulfillment of some pledge that he had made—to have the skin pinched up on the right side and the left side of the breast, a knife run through this skin, and

¹ The term Sun Dance comes from the Sioux, since they call one feature of the occasion "sun-looking dance," or the dance where they look at the sun.

² Nevertheless, certain tribes living on and near the plains do not practise it, and so far as known never have done so.

then a wooden skewer passed through each incision, which skewers were tied to the end of a rope fastened to the center-pole of the Medicine Lodge. The man danced at the length of this rope from the pole, and from time to time threw himself backward, striving to tear loose from the rope by breaking the skin. The dragging of skulls was a similar performance. The skin over both shoulder blades was pierced, skewers were passed through and tied to short ropes, to which buffalo-skulls were attached. The sufferer then walked and ran about the camp-circle in the effort to break the skin through which the skewers were passed and free himself from the skulls he was dragging.

Each candidate who had promised to make a Medicine Lodge was obliged to secure the direction and assistance of some man who had already made a Medicine Lodge. Besides the work of piercing the candidate and instructing him in certain ritual acts that should be performed, the instructor did everything in his power to help the young man to success, encouraging him to persevere in his difficult task, going through many motions of rubbing, holding, and shaking, with the purpose of making the young man courageous, long-winded, and enduring. Sometimes, if the novice was unable to tear the skewers from his skin, the instructor would add his weight and strength to the pull on the rope to complete the breaking away of the skin. Very often the candidate succeeded in breaking loose; sometimes he did not do so. To fail was no disgrace. The public regarded the matter as distinctly his affair, and while eager to encourage him to carry through successfully what he had undertaken, did not comment adversely if he had not the strength to break away, nor the endurance to carry the ordeal to the end.

Of late years, since the Government interfered with the operations of swinging to the pole or dragging skulls,³ and since the whole mode of life of the

³ A generation ago it was declared that this torture—swinging to the pole and dragging buffalo skulls—was self-inflicted for the purpose of making warriors, the implication being that no man might be considered a warrior who had not endured these sufferings. Other writers have said that the suffering was undergone by young men who wished to show that their hearts were strong; in other words, that it was a test of endurance. These beliefs many years ago led the Government to interfere with the Medicine Lodge. The Indian agents declared that the ceremony was a producer of warriors, while the missionaries, who held every form of religion wrong except the particular one professed by



Dancers in the Medicine Lodge

Indians has changed, the common form of public sacrifice in the Medicine Lodge is dancing without food or drink for three or four days, though young men who desired to offer this sacrifice to the powers have done so within the last few years. The strongly religious character of the Indian, and his simplicity, tend to keep alive in him these notions which in others we call primitive, but which we regard as wholly natural if they are found in the sacred books in which we believe.

The sacrifice of the body is as old as religion and is confined to no sect, creed, or race. It has been universally practised as a means of invoking the favor of the powers which rule the universe. The priests of Baal, when they called on their God to send down fire from Heaven to consume the sacrifice of Elijah, cut themselves with knives as they prayed to him. The Indians swing to the pole. The flagellants lashed themselves with whips, and the so-called Penitentes in the Southwest with the branches of the cactus, and endured the sufferings of crucifixion. The monk of

each, were repelled by the spectacle of the suffering, and both agreed that the ceremony ought to be stopped. So the Indian Bureau forbade the Sun Dance in many places.

the Middle Ages wore a hair shirt, and the woman of today fasts during Lent. It was the practice of the Indian, when he found himself in situations of difficulty or danger, to promise to sacrifice to the great powers, in case these powers would help him, something that was very precious; and what can be more precious than a man's own body and blood? All these are different expressions of the same feeling.

In the old war times it was common practice, if a man greatly desired some success, or if he found himself in some dangerous situation, or supposed he was threatened by misfortune, to make public promise that he would swing to the pole, would drag skulls, or would make some other offering—which he named—to the great powers, in the effort to gain their favor. Such a pledge was almost always kept. Failure to fulfill it would incur the contempt of the whole tribe and would bring inescapable misfortune. Unless the man making the vow specified a definite occasion when he would perform the sacrifice, he was at liberty to choose his own time. He might declare that he would swing to the pole in the Medicine Lodge, or that he would perform the same sacrifice alone in the hills.

If no Medicine Lodge ceremony was held for two or three years after he had made the vow, the man

who had promised to undergo the ordeal at the time of the Medicine Lodge postponed the payment of the vow until that ceremony was held. On the other hand, one who had promised that he would swing to the pole usually did so absolutely alone, except for the assistance of one or two men who in the past had themselves suffered in this way and whom he was obliged to ask to teach him how to perform the act in the ritual manner. He was altogether likely to make his sacrifice quietly, among the hills at a distance from the camp, seeking no notoriety, but rather striving, so far as possible, to keep the matter quiet. He might drag buffalo skulls in the same way. Such individual sacrifices have been offered within two or three years.

The sacred influences of the Medicine Lodge, like those of some other important ceremonies, extend through the entire camp and last throughout the ceremony.⁴ These influences make the occasion one particularly favorable for the performance of any spiritual and sacred operations of which prayer is especially a part. As in the case of the renewing of the medicine arrows, the time is one especially auspicious for the mixing of secret medicines and for the making of shields. The period of the Medicine Lodge was favorable to the performance of good deeds, and an appropriate time to pay vows.

Because of the presence of these favorable spirits at the ceremony, and their beneficent influence, all the food brought into the Medicine Lodge and allowed to remain there for a brief period is sanctified. Having passed through this sacred place, it is all—or almost all—taken out again and eaten by the people, not as food merely, but also for the spiritual benefit received by eating it. This belief is so firmly held that an ef-

fort is made to have everyone in the camp, from the youngest to the oldest, share in these benefits by eating of the food. A relative, for example, will take a tiny morsel of such food and will place it in the mouth of a babe too young to swallow, removing it a moment or two later, but believing that the blessing received by the food while in the Medicine Lodge will be imparted to the infant.



During the *Massaum*

MASSAUM

The *Massaum* ceremony, also called the Animal Dance, Buffalo Dance, Crazy Dance, and Foolish Dance, appears to be an ancient rite. It is sometimes spoken of as the ceremony during which people act as if they were crazy or foolish. *Massaum* is related to the word *massa'ne*, foolish or crazy, and is interpreted as the lodge of the crazy, or the lodge of the "Contraries." The *Massaum* ceremony is said to have been brought to the tribe by one of the two similarly dressed young men who went into the earth and brought out food—the one who represented the Tsistsistas. The Great Power had taken pity on these two men, one named Sweet Medicine, a Cheyenne, and the other, Standing

⁴ All who are present in the camp receive a blessing in some degree. For this reason, in old times, every member of the tribe wished and was expected to be present. Messengers were sent about to every small camp to notify it of the time of the ceremony. If, as rarely happened, some man was slow in coming to the meeting place, a band of soldiers was sent to bring him in. I have no record of any family or group of Cheyenne refusing to attend this ceremony, though it is stated that on one or two occasions the messengers have been unable to find some little camp at a distance from the principal village. I know of no case like that instanced in an earlier paper on the Cheyenne, where Big Ribs, a famous warrior, resisted and drove away a group of soldiers sent to his camp to bring him to the ceremony of renewing the medicine arrows. See *American Anthropologist*, N. S., vol. XII, p. 547.



During the *Massaum*

On The Ground, a Suhtai. To his own tribe Sweet Medicine brought the medicine arrows; while to his, Standing On The Ground brought the buffalo cap. He brought the Suhtai the ceremony of the Medicine Lodge. All these mysteries and ceremonies came to these men from within the earth; and all they learned about them and afterward taught to the tribes was the instruction that they had received from the spirits whom they encountered in the mysterious underground lodges they had entered.

The ceremony is a sacrifice offered specifically for the benefit of the man who has pledged himself to perform it, but is also for the general benefit of the whole tribe. The offerings are made to the earth, the obvious source of subsistence. As so often explained, the earth supports us, produces food for the animals on whose flesh we depend, and also the berries and the roots which we eat. Out of and over it flows the water we drink. Above all things, therefore, the earth is to be propitiated. The powers through whom the earth continues to exist and who live within it must receive reverence and sacrifice.

The *Massaum* ceremony was often vowed during a war journey. The leader, anxious for the success of his expedition, or for the health of someone left at

home, or for the general good of the tribe, might say, “*Nāh mēh’ ā ī’ wāk ū* (I give woman I promise).” The sacrifice was for the general good, but the man who vowed it received the greater benefit.

Different groups of animals—buffalo, elk, deer, foxes, horses, cranes, antelope, bears, mountain-lions, wolves, coyotes, and blackbirds—appear in this ceremony. They come from different lodges scattered about the circle of the camp. The people standing for each species imitated their actions. The bear used to go stealthily about, trying to approach near enough to some animal to make a rush and catch it; the mountain-lion would creep and creep and then make a long jump—perhaps twenty feet and catch a young boy, a calf.

These different groups of animals usually had their origin in a dream. Some man may have dreamed that he saw some animal—a deer, a buffalo, or some other mammal or bird—acting in a peculiar way, and that this animal gave him the power to perform certain mysterious (supernatural) acts. He announced to some close friend or relative, perhaps to some member of his soldier society, that this power had been given him, and the two talked the matter over. Perhaps the friend may have agreed to assist him who had the

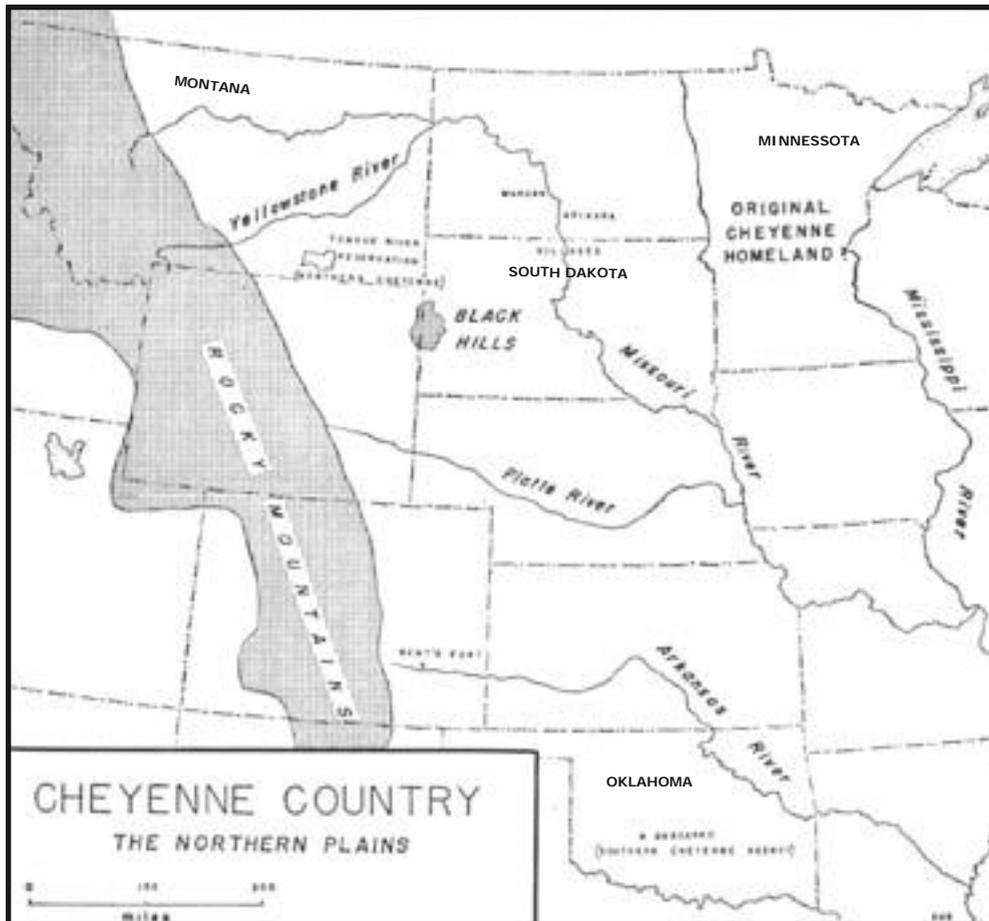
dream. Other people were taken into the confidence of the dreamer, and at length a little group of people was formed who would help the man in what he was to undertake. No doubt different motives influenced the various people who joined the group; these may have been their friendship for the man, or a belief that their action would bring them health or other good fortune.

The man who had dreamed may perhaps have felt that he had been given the power to shoot and wound

a man so as to cause blood to flow from his mouth, and then to heal the wound; how to prepare for such an act, and what ceremonies to perform to achieve success. The ceremonies attached to the different groups, their dress, and their painting were determined by the dream of the man who organized each.

It may have happened that more than one man had dreamed about buffalo, elk, or deer, in which event there may have been two or more groups representing those animals.

MAP OF THE CHEYENNE COUNTRY



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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

GEORGE BIRD GRINNELL (1849-1938) was a historian, naturalist, explorer, sportsman, and conservationist. He helped to establish Yellowstone Park and Glacier National Park, co-founded the first Audubon Society, and along with Teddy Roosevelt, co-founded the Boone and Crockett Club. Grinnell was a long-time editor of *Forest and Stream* and wrote several landmark books on the Pawnee, Blackfoot, and Cheyenne peoples, having lived with and befriended the last generation to have known the glorious freedom of the buffalo days. Grinnell's career as a writer and recorder of Indian life-ways would later be characterized by the renowned historian Stephen Ambrose as "of incalculable benefit to every student of Western or Indian history."

JOSEPH A. FITZGERALD studied Comparative Religion at Indiana University, where he also earned a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree. He is a professional editor whose previous publications include *Honen the Buddhist Saint: Essential Writings and Official Biography*, *The Way and the Mountain: Tibet, Buddhism, and Tradition*, and *The Essential Sri Anandamayi Ma: Life and Teachings of a 20th Century Saint from India*. He lives with his wife and daughter in Bloomington, Indiana.



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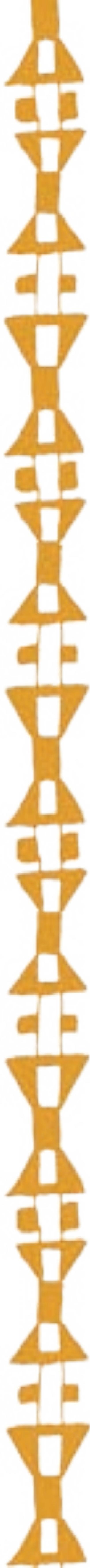
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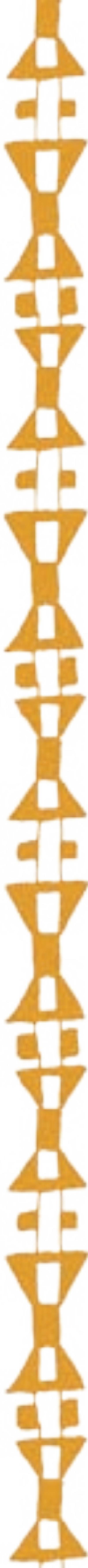


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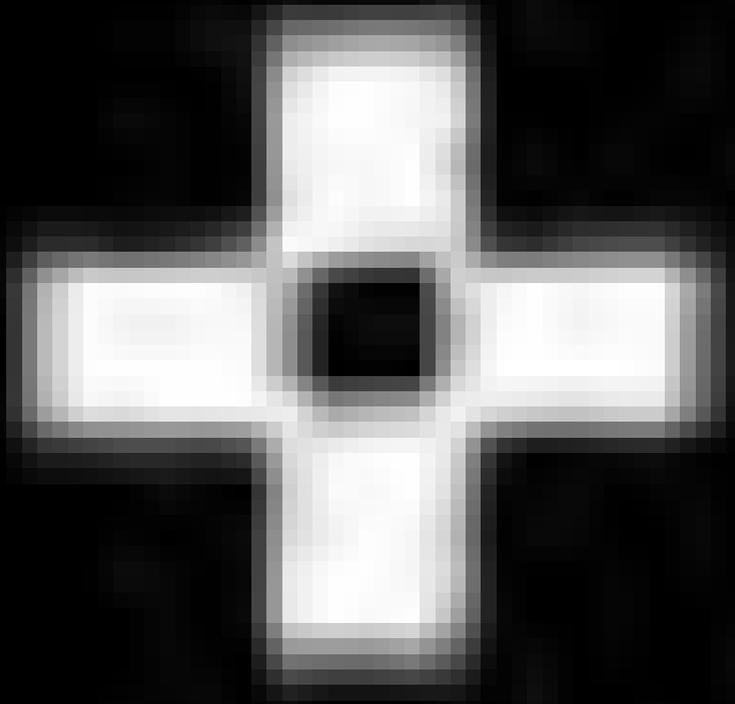










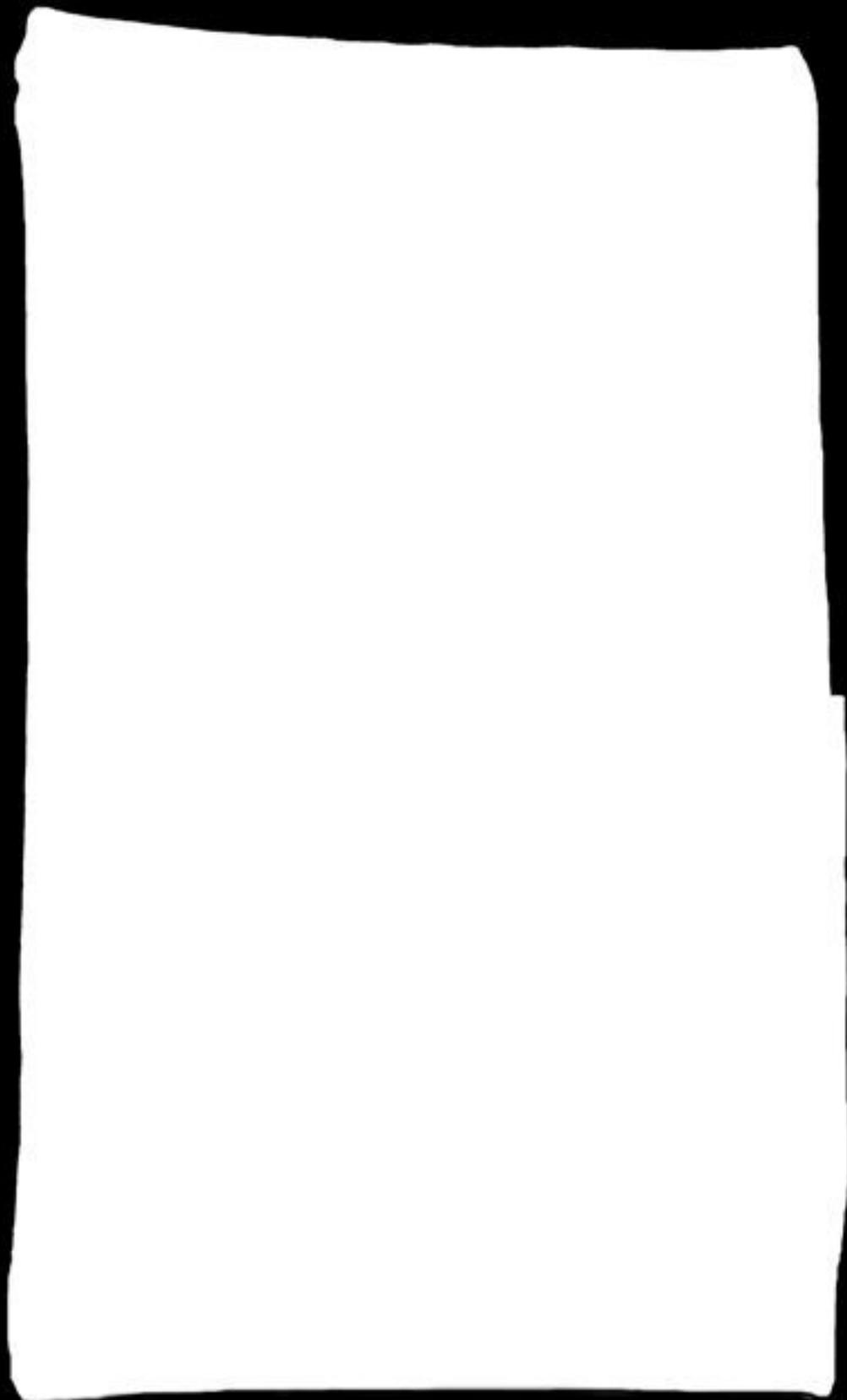


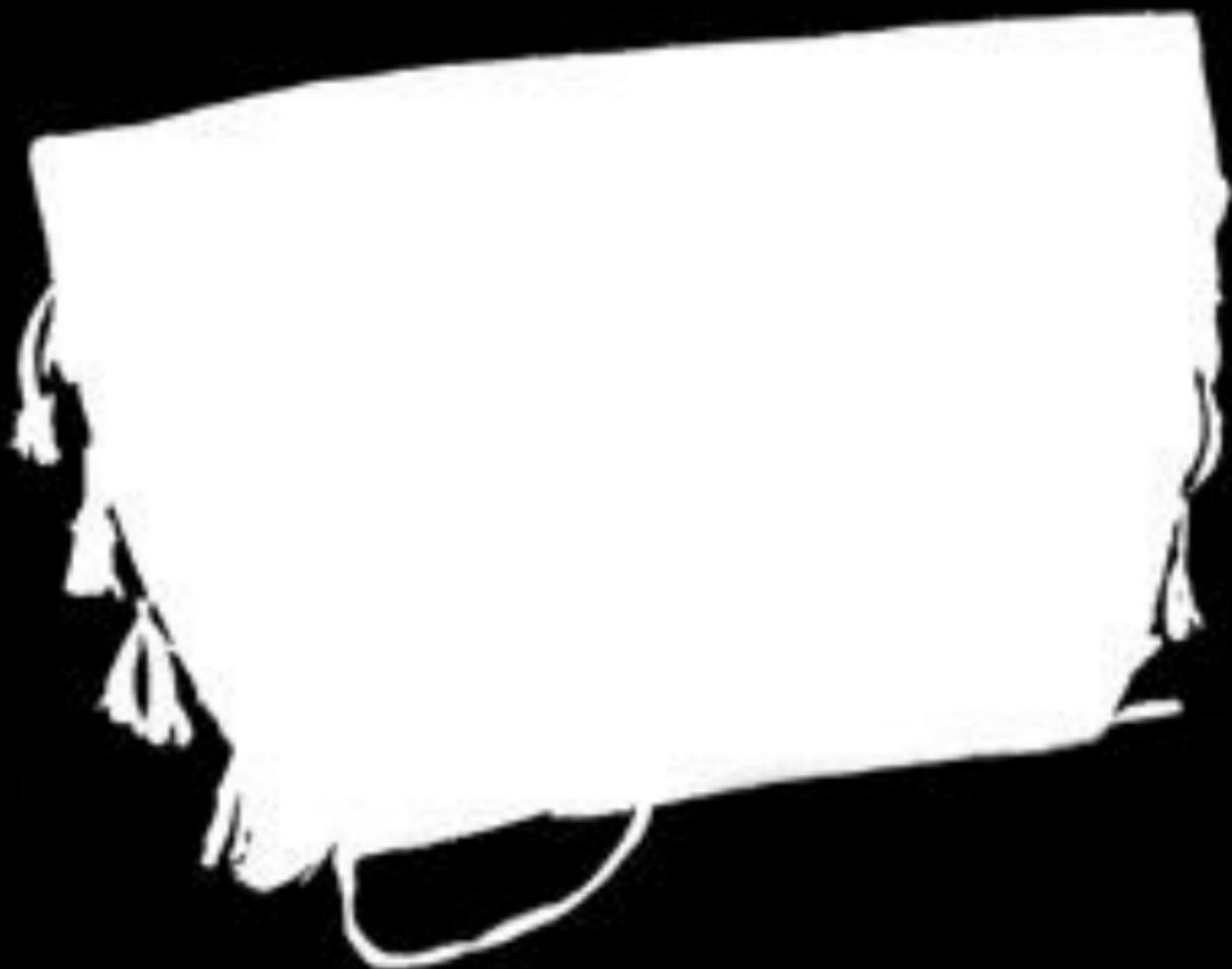


















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