GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WITNESSED INDIAN SECRET RITES

DR. J. WALTER FEWKES IS A VERITABLE "MEDICINE MAN" AND REGULARLY APPOINTED CEREMONIAL PRIEST — MISS FLETCHER OF THE BUREAU OF ETHNOLOGY HAS BEEN INITIATED INTO MANY SECRET CIRCLES — MR. JAMES MOONEY HAS WITNESSED THE WEIRD AND AWFUL RITE OF THE WASHING OF THE SNAKES.

JUST BEFORE THE DANCE.

FEW casual visitors to the bureau of ethnology, on F street, who converse with the quiet and studious Dr. J. Walter Fewkes of that institution, can realize that the eminent scientist is a veritable "medicine man," and regularly appointed ceremonial priest of one of the most savage Indian tribes of the country.

So far as known, Dr. Fewkes is the only white man who has had conferred upon him the rank, higher in the eyes of the Indian than that even of chief—of priest, or medicine man. Yet among the Hopi tribe of Arizona, Dr. Fewkes, under his Indian name of Naquapi, or "Medicine Bow," is recognized with reverence as one entitled to take part in one of the weirdest rites known among the red men.

In an office adjoining that of Dr. Fewkes is found Mr. James Mooney, who has been initiated into many Indian customs and ceremonies, and who has lived among the Kiowa tribe for twelve years as one of themselves. Mr. Mooney has seen the dread and mysterious "ghost dance," which has been proscribed by the government. Other scientists in this city, among them Miss Alice Fletcher, whose works upon ethnology are well known, have, by living among the Indians and gaining their confidence, been admitted to divers tribal honors, and permitted to witness and sometimes participate in secret rites, to which only a few of the savages themselves have had entree.

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Among these rites, as described by the scientists, are some which, for an almost supernatural weirdness, have not their counterpart in any other part of the world. Witness the snake dance, as practiced by the Hopi Indians, the most secret rites of which Dr. Fewkes, as a member of the Antelope fraternity, has been enabled to observe. The celebration of this dance lasts nine days. "The secret ceremonials," said Dr. Fewkes, "occupy the first two days, and are conducted in two subterranean rooms, called kivas, in one of which are the antelope and in the other the snake priests.

"Never shall I forget the weird horror of one phase of these ceremonies," said Dr. Fewkes. "This feature of the elaborate proceedings, all of which pertaining to the Antelope Brotherhood I had been enabled to follow, was the washing of the snakes. Some companions of mine, although 'initiated' into the fraternity, were denied admission to the kiva where this hideous rite was performed, and I believe my experience to be unique.

"It was back in the year 1891 that I beheld the snake-washing proceeding, which preceded the public dance in the open air. Early in the afternoon a large earthen vessel decorated with symbolic devices was brought to the kiva or underground chamber. This was placed upon a slight mound near the fireplace. The leading snake priests gathered around this bowl, seating themselves in an irregular crescent. Three men stood at the east end of the room near the four jars in which the snakes were confined. Every snake man was naked and had rubbed himself with spittle and iron oxide, called by them 'cu-ta,' and wore a red feather in his hair. I wore the red feather, but did not disrobe. No word above a whisper was spoken in that solemn conclave, and it was evident that the most awful ceremony in the whole series was about to begin.

"Before the ceremony began at all there was considerable doubt expressed by the snake priests as to whether I could remain, and now I was again warned to leave and that I would swell up and burst or that other dire troubles would come to me as a consequence of beholding rites which no one except a native priest had ever witnessed.

"At a certain hour one of the priests solemnly poured a liquid into the bowl from a water jar, holding it as he did so to the four cardinal points on the four corresponding sides of the bowl. In doing this he followed the ceremonial circuit, beginning with the north side of the bowl and ending with two passes, representing the above and below. A mystic cross was also drawn upon the sand mound.

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"The pipe-lighter lit an old 'snake pipe' ornamented with the cloud symbols and passed it around among the priests. The latter then breathed upon handfuls of the so-called sacred meal, casting them into the bowl, which was about half full of liquid. Then the snake priests who stood by the snake jars, which were in the east corner of the room, began to take out the reptiles—deadly rattlesnakes, mind you—and stood holding several of them in their hands, an act which, I must confess, engrossed my attention to the exclusion of aught else. One of the priests then prayed, and after a brief interval two rattlesnakes were handed him, after which other of the venomous reptiles were passed to the others, and each of the six priests who sat around the bowl held two rattlesnakes by the necks with the heads elevated above the bowl.

"A low noise from the rattlers of the priests, which shortly after was accompanied by a melodious hum by all present, then began. The priests who held the snakes beat time up and down above the liquid with the reptiles, which wound their bodies around the arms of the holders. The song went on and frequently changed, growing louder and wilder, until it burst forth into a fierce, blood-curdling yell or war cry. At this moment the heads of the snakes were thrust several times into the liquid, so that even parts of the bodies were submerged, and were then drawn out not having left the hands of the priests, and forcibly thrown across the room upon a sand mosaic, knocking down the crocks and other objects placed about it.

"As they fell upon the sand picture three snake priests stood in readiness, and when the reptiles squirmed about or coiled for defense these men, who were armed with snake whips, brushed them back and forth in the sand of the altar. The excitement which accompanied this ceremony I could not adequately describe.

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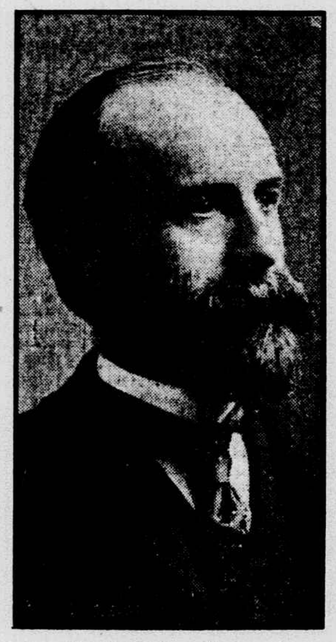
"The low, weird song continued while other rattlesnakes were taken in the hands of the priests, and as the song rose again to the wild warcry these snakes were also plunged into the liquid and thrown upon the writhing mass which now occupied the place of the altar. Again and again this was repeated until all the snakes had been treated in the same way, and reptiles, fetiches, crooks and sand were mixed together in one confused mass. As the excitement subsided and the snakes crawled to the corners of the kiva, seeking vainly for protection, they were again pushed back in the mass, and brushed together in the sand in order that their bodies might be thoroughly dried. Every snake in the collection was thus washed, harmless varieties being bathed after the venomous. The low, weird song of the snake priests continued, and gradually died away until there was no sound but the warning rattles of the serpents mingled with that of the rattles in the hands of the chiefs, and finally the motion of the snake whips ceased and all was silent.

"The public part of the snake dance, during which the snakes were carried by the dancers in the presence of spectators, has been repeatedly described, and still forms a feature of attraction to curious travelers in the southwest. All visitors are gladly welcomed by the Hopi to this ceremony, which is sufficiently weird in itself. The snakes, which up to this time had been left in the kiva, are publicly brought out and carried about the plaza. The snake priests are divided into groups of three each, called, respectively, the carrier, hugger and gatherer, according to their different functions.

"These trios gathered in line near the entrance to the kiva, and the carrier knelt down in front of it, extending his hand inside while the hugger lifted the carrier's foxskin and stroked its back with his whip. As the carrier rose he held a venomous snake. Without hesitation he placed the writhing animal in his mouth, grasping its neck with his teeth or lips. He closed his eyes, and the hugger placed his left arm about the carrier's neck. The reptile was so held that its head pointed toward the right and



Dr. J. Walter Fewkes.

the hugger brushed his whip before the serpent's mouth to shield the carrier's face. A procession of these groups, one individual in each holding in his mouth a writhing rattlesnake, is thus formed."

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It has been generally doubted that the Indians of this country were originally conversant with the phenomena of hypnotism, but the investigations of Mr. Mooney on this point are interesting. He says:

"The most important feature of the ghost dance, and the secret of the trances, I found to have been hypnotism. It has been hastily assumed that hypnotic knowledge and ability belong only to an overripe civilization, such as that of India and ancient Egypt, or to the most modern period of scientific investigation. The fact is, however, that practical knowledge, if not understanding, of such things belongs to people who live near to nature, and I have had frequent opportunity to observe and study it in the ghost dance on the plains.

"When I came among the Arapahoe and Cheyennes, in 1890, I was told a lot of stories by these Indians of wonderful things that occurred in the ghost dance—how people died, went to heaven and came back again, and how they talked with dead friends and brought back messages from the other world. Having, during the course of that winter, gained the confidence of the Indians—which I have always found an easy matter if you show neither suspicion nor fear—I was invited the following summer not only to witness but to participate in the mysterious ghost dance, and was able to note all the stages of the hypnotic phenomena, from the time the subject first attracted the notice of the medicine man through the staggering, the rigidity, the unconsciousness and back again to wakefulness.

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"Young women are usually the first to be affected, then older women, and lastly men. Sometimes, however, a man proves as sensitive as the average woman. In particular I have seen one young Arapahoe become rigid in the trance night after night. He was a Carlisle student.

"Sometimes before falling the hypnotized subjects ran wildly around the circle or out over the prairie, or went through various crazy evolutions like those of a lunatic. On one occasion—but only once—I have seen the medicine man point his finger almost in the face of the hypnotized subject, and then, withdrawing his finger, describe with it a large circle about the tipis. The subject followed the direction indicated, sometimes being hidden by the crowd from view, and finally returned, with his eyes still fixed and staring, to the place where the medicine man was standing. There was unquestionably a good deal of humbug mixed with these performances, some evidently pretending to be hypnotized in order to attract notice or to bring about such a condition from force of imitation, but, in my opinion, the greater portion was unquestionably genuine and beyond the control of the subjects. In many instances the hypnotized person spun around for minutes at a time like a dervish, or whirled the arms with apparently impossible speed, or assumed and retained until the final fall most uncomfortable positions, which it would have been quite impossible to have kept for any length of time under normal conditions. Frequently a considerable number of persons were within the ring at once, in all the various stages of hypnotism. The proportion of women thus affected was about three times that of men."

Miss Fletcher, who has done much work for the bureau of ethnology, has received initiation into a number of Indian inner circles, among them the Dakota warrior society of the Hae-thu-ska. "It was at the so-called 'grass dance' of that tribe," said Miss Fletcher, "that the honor was conferred upon me. At that time I had lived so long among the Indians that I was not frightened at the weird ceremonial, although I shall not easily forget my first admission to a war dance. It was on a sunny September morning, more than a score of years ago, that, as I looked from my tent over the Dakota prairie, I saw the Indian crier emerge from the chief's lodge. He was an old Indian, in native garb, and he went from tent to tent calling upon the people to assemble at nightfall in the great wigwam. The invitation was extended to me as a courtesy from the son of the old chief Spotted Tail, whose guest I then was.

"I found myself in the midst of a picturesque group of white, cone-shaped tents, among which, and overtopping them all, rose the sharp outlines of the great reception tent, about the entrance to which were gathered gala-dressed people, resplendent in red, green and yellow blankets. The tent cover was thrown back, exposing the tall trim poles, cut in the forests of the Black Hills, and within, at the right of the entrance, I saw men and women seated around the drum, which was supported a few inches from the ground upon four sticks. Farther along, around the inside of the tent, were crouched many men closely muffled in their robes. Upon my entrance I was appalled by a sudden mighty beating of the drum, accompanied by deafening yells, but, following the dictates of Indian etiquette, I paid no heed to this extraordinary welcome, passing as calmly as I could to the back of the tent, where I sat down in the middle of an unoccupied space, close to the edge of the covering.

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"On either side of the tent were lines of silent, motionless figures, their robes closely wrapped about them. No touch of color enlivened the somber scene within, save in the costume of the few women who sat near the drum. Their glossy black braids fell in heavy loops upon their red and green tunics, the russet hue of their faces was heightened by touches of vermillion upon the cheeks, their ear ornaments of white shell hung nearly to their waists and their arms were encircled with shining brass bangles. These glints of brightness only added to the weirdness of the place. Beyond, framed by the opening of the tent against the pale primrose of the evening sky, was the contrasting picture of gayly dressed and painted men and women, chatting and laughing and showing their small white teeth.

"The entire scene oppressed me, and before I could begin to reconcile myself to my surroundings, there was a slight stir in the vicinity of the drum, and suddenly a half-dozen arms rose and fell upon that instrument with such force as to cause it to rebound upon its fastenings. A solitary voice, of high and shrill pitch, uttered a few wavering notes, followed on the next drum beat by the entire company of singers, each one striving apparently to outsing all the rest. Now, indeed, my nervous tension reached a painful point. A dozen of the hitherto silent, motionless figures sprang high in the air, their robes falling in a heap, as, with bended arms and knees they leaped toward the center of the tent.

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"The sudden appearance, the frantic movements of the advancing and retreating forms, the war clubs and the thud of the bare feet upon the ground called up the savage nature in all its terrible intensity, while every act of Indian atrocity gave a blood-curdling interpretation to the scene. Gladly would I have now escaped, but these frenzied and demoniac-looking creatures were between me and the opening, and even if I succeeded in eluding their grasp I could not escape the hundreds outside the tent. I fancied, indeed, that those treacherous, gayly dressed and laughing people were the same race as these fiends, and might have undergone a similar hideous transformation.

"Since that time I have had many a laugh with my Indian friends over this first and only fright, caused, as I now recognize, by the popular idea of Indians.

"While among the Omahas and not long after this occasion of my first witnessing a war dance I fell ill. My sickness was a severe one, and I lay for months gently ministered to by these savages. My returning health was celebrated by my initiation into the wa-wan ceremony. Of course, I did not partake literally of the pipes of fellowship which figure in that ceremony, but the latter greatly impressed me, particularaly the music, in which I was able to join."

Dr. Walter Hough, the eminent anthropologist of the Smithsonian Institution, did, however, partake of the Indian pipe of fellowship, and described the effect thereof as distinctly nauseating. Dr. Hough is a lover of tobacco. "But," said he, "the Indians, at least for ceremonial occasions, mix some herbs in the tobacco which give it a heavy flavor and which, I must say, with all my varied experience in the use of the weed, was novel and very unpleasant. Indeed, that smoke made me so dizzy that I really did not know where I was."

Dr. Hough is a member in good standing of the Moki tribe of Arizona, having been adopted according to rule, and rejoices in the Indian name of "Kuktaimie."

A PORTION OF THE CEREMONY.

A SQUAW IN THE GHOST DANCE.

MRS. TAFT'S "CABINET" A NOTABLE ARRAY OF TALENTED WOMEN

RARELY Has Any First Lady of the Land Gone Into Washington Social Life Backed by Such an Array of Talented and Clever Women as Mrs. Taft—The Wives of the Cabinet Members, Those Who Will Assist Her in Entertaining and in Dictating the Social Life of Washington in the Next Four Years, Include Brilliant Women—Mrs. Knox, Mrs. Meyer, Mrs. Sherman and Mrs. MacVeagh Have All Had Notable Successes.

BRILLIANT beyond the social life of Washington under any administration in recent history should be the reign of Mrs. Taft.

It is the first lady of the land who determines the polite life of the capital, and her sway is just as complete in this realm as her husband's is over the affairs of state.

Much depends on the character of the women who compose the cabinet of the President's wife, the wives of the officers who hold the various portfolios. This term sees perhaps the most talented assembly of ladies ever known together at one time. In fact, if in picking his cabinet the President had in mind the social qualifications of their wives, he could not have done better.

Nearly all of them have had brilliant experience in Washington. In the number is represented considerable wealth, and there will be no lack of distinction during the years that they are in the high place of power in Washington.

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Mrs. James S. Sherman is expected to maintain the high ideals of Mrs. Garret A. Hobart and Mrs. Charles W. Fairbanks, the two most talented wives of the Vice Presidents. Mrs. Sherman has never had a social secretary, yet her judgment is so good and her memory so excellent that she never makes a mistake. Her experience was gained largely while her husband was a member of Congress. She knows everybody, and there is small chance that her stay in Washington will be marked by any blunders.

Mrs. Philander C. Knox, wife of the head of the cabinet, will be an invaluable lieutenant to Mrs. Taft. The two are old comrades. They have been associated together for some time, during the period that their husbands served in the cabinet of President Roosevelt. Their houses used only to be a short distance apart, and they were often seen together.

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No one knows Washington much better than Mrs. Knox, and she even has a mastery of the peculiar duties that fall to the lot of the wife of the Secretary of State, for she has been for many years the close friend of Mrs. Elihu Root, who was the premier under the Roosevelt administration.

The new Secretary of State has the wealth to gratify all the social aspirations of his wife, and she on her part is mistress of the last word in the art of receiving and entertaining with tact and grace.

Mrs. Franklin MacVeagh, wife of the new Secretary of the Treasury, will stand next to Mrs. Knox. She has already had excellent training in the life of Washington through her close friendship with the family of her husband's brother, Mr. Wayne MacVeagh of Pennsylvania, who has served in two cabinets. She is of New England stock, and, like Mrs. Knox, has ample wealth to gratify her desires in the way of adding brilliancy to the social year at Washington.

Mrs. Dickinson, wife of Jacob McGavock Dickinson, the new Secretary of War, presents the novelty of a southern woman prominent in a republican cabinet; in fact, the wife of a man who served against the north in the war of the rebellion.

Mrs. Dickinson, it is believed, is destined to be one of the most popular women of the cabinet. She is noted for grace and tact. She has traveled all the world over, and was the head of the social life of Memphis, Tenn. Mrs. Dickinson accompanied her husband to Peking, whence he went as a member of the commission to settle the Boxer troubles. Like Mrs. Taft, Mrs. Dickinson is quite a linguist, and she and the wife of the President can converse together in several languages. Mrs. Dickinson has the southern patois so delightful to northerners and she is sure to be immensely popular.

Coming back to Washington is almost like returning home to Mrs. George Wickersham, for here she spent a considerable part of her girlhood. Her father, Cornelius Wendell, was very fond of the capital, and had a handsome home here. Mildred Wendell attended Mme. Burr's fashionable school, and here she made friendships with many girls who have now taken places of prominence in the social life of the capital. As Mrs. Wickersham she will be destined to play hostess to many of these old-time schoolgirl friends.

Miss Constance Wickersham, a daughter, fourteen years of age, will accompany her parents to the capital.

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Mrs. George von L. Meyer, wife of the new Secretary of the Navy, has had excellent experience in the duties of a cabinet officer's wife, for her husband as Postmaster General was a valued member of the cabinet of President Roosevelt, and Mrs. Meyer made a great success by her charms as a hostess. She has been presented at most of the foreign courts, and lived at Rome, where her husband was ambassador. It will also be remembered that Mr. Meyer was ambassador to Russia during the period of the Japanese troubles with the Muscovites, and all through the crisis acquitted himself most creditably.

Besides the attraction of the personality of his wife, the Secretary of the Navy will also have his house made brilliant by the presence of his daughters, Miss Julia Meyer and Miss Alice Meyer, who are almost of an age and almost of a size, and are noted for their life and dash. Both are fond of automobiling, and have the nattiest kind of a little electric brougham in which they make their calls.

Mrs. Richard Ballinger does not come to Washington as a newcomer, for the Secretary of the Interior was formerly connected with the land office, and has the advantage of many valuable connections and friendships made during that time. His wife is very partial to society.

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The Secretary of Agriculture, the veteran James Wilson, who has served under three Presidents—McKinley, Roosevelt and Taft—is a widower, and the entertaining he does is entirely in the hands of his daughter, Miss Flora Wilson. She had planned to go abroad this year and study music, but it is possible that for the present at least she may stay with her father and preside over his household.

Mrs. Charles Nagel is perhaps the least known of the women who will dominate the social life of the present administration.

Her husband is the new Secretary of Commerce and Labor. For her it will be a duty of building up new friends and connections, but those who have known Mrs. Nagel at her summer home in Marion, Mass., speak of her as a most tactful and clever hostess, who is certain to become a favorite in Washington.

The only one of the cabinet officers who lacks a wife or daughter to take charge of his social duties is Frank Hitchcock, who is a bachelor. He is the first unmarried man to become a member of a cabinet in many years, and it will be a marvel indeed if he succeeds in going through four years of life in the capital without contracting an alliance. Mr. Hitchcock is already very popular, and with the added prestige of a portfolio he is sure to be one of the most sought men.

Mrs. Philander C. Knox.

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Mrs. J. McG. Dickinson.

Mrs. Franklin MacVeagh.

Mrs. R. A. Ballinger.

Mrs. G. Wickersham.

The Emotional Jury.

THE REV. ANNA SHAW was discussing playfully her contention—raised at Mrs. Clarence Mackay's house—that man, not woman, was too emotional to vote.

"Why," said the learned lady, "take all these extraordinary jury stories. They show the most intense emotionalism. And yet they have nothing to do with women.

"For instance, there's the story of the tin can murder. The jury remained out thirty-four hours. Then it filed back into the courtroom, very stale and ill-humored.

"'Gentlemen, what is your verdict?' said the judge.

"'Wall,' said the foreman, 'eleven on us is for hangin', jedge, yer honor; but the twelfth man sticks out for acquittal, and there ain't no arguin' with him. He's a low-down, no 'count rooster any ways, and so we've decided to make our verdict unanermous by hangin' 'em both.'"

A Compromise.

"ALEXANDER HARRISON, the noted sea painter, talked about art students at a tea in his Concarneau studio," said a picture dealer.

"Mr. Harrison said that the struggling student was usually very proud. He instanced one of his own proteges.

"This youth, a native of Pont Aven, went to Paris to study, and occasionally visited an uncle there—an elderly shoemaker on the Rue Vaugirard. The shoemaker was to be counted on for a square meal and sometimes even for a small loan.

"Well, one morning the uncle welcomed the student far more warmly than was his habit.

"'Just in time,' he said, rubbing his hands. 'The kitchen door wants painting and I was about to give the job to the commissionaire for three francs. But you can have it now. I'll pay you five.'

"The student flushed and bit his lip. Hard up as he was, he could not so degrade his art as to paint a kitchen door. Yet he needed money badly.

"'Uncle,' he said, smiling as a happy thought came to him. 'I'll tell you what to do. Let the commissionaire paint the door for three francs, as you had intended, and give me the two francs difference.'"

The city of Niagara Falls is rapidly increasing in population, owing to the rapid industrial expanson of that section of the country.

BASE BALL CURVER.

Device Fits Over Fingers and Enables Pitcher to Do Wonders.

If the Nebraska man who invented the base ball curver shown in the cut had kept the idea to himself and used it secretly, he could command a salary from one of the big league teams that would make an insurance president sit up and take notice. By means of this simple little device a man can throw inshoots, outshoots and drops with as much ease as he can pitch a straight ball, and the curves will be such as fans never dreamed of. The contrivance is simply a pair of connected elastic loops, designed to fit over the first two fingers of the right or left hand, as the case may be. Inside each loop is a metal plate with prongs which engage the ball and twist it in the direction desired. Every man who has played base ball to any extent knows what twist must be given a ball to make it curve in a given direction. The difficulty is to get such a purchase on the sphere as to make the twist sufficiently pronounced. With the metal grip this is easy.

Solves Mystery of Curves.

The proposed American exposition to be held in London next year has been thoroughly organized, and special efforts are being made to secure exhibits from the western part of this country.