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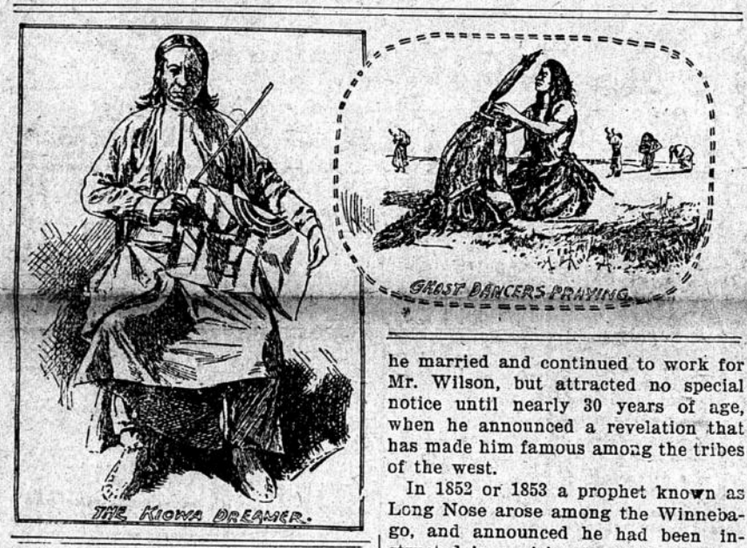
WEIRD GHOST DANCES

RELIGIOUS INFLUENCE ON THE WILD INDIANS.

The Messiah's Teachings—The Indians Believe That the Time Will Come When the Whole Indian Race, Living and Dead, Will Be Reunited.

THE news from Idaho that three hundred Bannock braves had left the reservation and had resumed the ghost dance struck terror to the hearts of those living within a hundred miles of the reservation. Probably no form of religious revival among the Indians has so much influence upon the red man as the ghost dance. The bureau of ethnology at Washington, through James Mooney, has for several years past made a special study of the ghost dance.

In 1890 Mr. Mooney was preparing to go to the Indian territory under the auspices of the bureau of ethnology to continue researches among the Cherokees when the dance first began to attract attention. He asked and received permission to investigate the subject among the wilder tribes of the Territory. Proceeding directly to the Cheyenne and Arapaho, it soon became evident there was more in the ghost dance than had been suspected, with the result that the investigation, to which it had been intended to devote a few weeks, was extended over three years.



Indeed he declares that it might be continued indefinitely, as the dance still exists and is developing new features at every performance.

The first visit of about four months was made to the Arapaho, Cheyenne, Kiowa, Comanche, Apache, Caddo and Wichita, all living together in what was then Indian Territory. These tribes were all more or less under the influence of the new religion. The principal study was made among the Arapaho, who were among the most active propagators of the Messiah doctrine among the southern tribes, and are especially friendly and cordial in disposition. Another trip lasting three months was made among the Kiawas, and a third for the purpose of investigating the dance among the Sioux, where it attracted most attention, and among the Paiute, where it originated. On this journey, the author visited the Omaha, Winnebago, Sioux of Pine Ridge, Paiute, Cheyenne and Arapaho, met and talked with the Messiah himself, and afterwards on the strength of this fact obtained from the Cheyenne the original letter containing his message and instruction to the southern tribes. The entire investigation occupied twenty-two months and involved nearly 32,000 miles of travel and more or less time spent with about twenty tribes.

Mr. Mooney in his account of the ghost dance religion proper prefaces it with a discussion of the primitive Messiah belief and or the teachings of the various Indian prophets who have preceded Wovoka, the founder of the ghost dance cult.

Probably every tribe had its early hero god, who accomplished his work in the mythic halcyon days, and whose return to resume his kingdom is eagerly looked for. Curiously enough, this Messiah is usually described as a white man with a flowing beard.

The doctrine that the world is old and worn out, and that the time of its renewal is at hand, is an essential part of the teachings of the ghost dance. The number of these cycles of destruction is variously stated among different tribes. Mr. Mooney quotes Schoolcraft's account of the myth among the Winnebago as the most sadly prophetic. Forty years ago they held that the tenth generation of their people was near its close, and that at the end of the thirteenth the red race would be destroyed. By prayers and no fire in the center, being much like the modern ghost dance.

It is said that the Mormons, who hold the theory that the Indians are the descendants of the "ten lost tribes," cherish the belief that some of the lost Jews are still ice bound in the frozen north, whence they will emerge to join their brethren in the south. When the news of this Indian revelation came to their ears the Mormon priests accepted it as a prophecy of the sppedy fulfilment of their own traditions, and Orson Pratt preached a sermon which was extensively copied and commented upon at the time, urging the faithful to arrange their affairs, and put their houses in order to receive the long-expected wanderers. It appears that the Mormons sent emissaries to the Bannocks urging them to go to Salt Lake City to be baptized into the Mormon religion. A large number accepted the invitation without the knowledge of the agent, went down to Utah, and were there baptized and then returned to work as missionaries of the new faith among the tribes. The Mormons furnished free rations to all who would come, took an active interest in the religious ferment then existing among the Indians and helped to give shape, according to Mr. Mooney, to the doctrine which crystallized some years later as the ghost dance.

When Tavibo, the prophet of Mason Valley, died about 1870, he left a son named Wovoka about 14 years of age. This youth, who afterward became the Messiah, became attached to the family of a ranchman in Mason Valley named David Wilson, who took an interest in him and bestowed on him the name of Jack Wilson, by which he is commonly known to the whites. From his association with this family he gained some knowledge of English, together with a confused idea of the white man's theology. On growing up he married and continued to work for Mr. Wilson, but attracted no special notice until nearly 30 years of age, when he announced a revelation that has made him famous among the tribes of the west.

In 1852 or 1853 a prophet known as Long Nose arose among the Winnebago, and announced he had been instructed in a vision to teach his people a new dance which he called the friendship dance. In 1870 another prophet arose among the Paiute in Nevada. He is said to be the father of the present "Messiah," who has unquestionably derived many of his ideas from him, and lived, as does his son, in Mason Valley, about 60 miles from Virginia City. The latter told Mr. Mooney that his father's name was Tavibo, or "White Man," and that he was a petty chief, but not a prophet or preacher, although he used to have visions and was invulnerable. There seems to be no doubt that he did preach and prophesy, and introduce a new religious dance among his people, and the doctrine which he promulgated and the hopes he held out 20 years ago were the foundation on which his son has built his present Messiah religion.

He was visited by Indians from Oregon and Idaho, and his teachings were felt among the Bannock and Shoshoni, as well as among the scattered band of Paiute, to whom he continued to preach until his death.

On returning to the Cheyenne and Arapaho and comparing notes with some of their recent delegates to Wovoka, Mr. Mooney states that he discovered something of Wovoka's hypnotic methods, and incidentally learned how much of miracle depends on the mental receptivity of the observer. Tall Bull, one of the Cheyenne delegates and captain of the Indian police, said before leaving they asked Wovoka to give some proof of his supernatural powers. Accordingly he had ranged them in front of him, with his sombrero between and his eagle feathers in his hand. Then with a quick movement he had put his hand in his empty hat and drawn out from it "something black." Tall Bull would not admit that anything more had happened. Black Coyote, one of the Arapaho delegates and also a police officer, related the same incident, but with a different sequel, and told how when the Messiah had waved his feathers over his hat and withdrew his hand, Black Coyote looked into the hat, and there "saw the whole world."

The great underlying principles of the ghost dance doctrine is that the time will come when the whole Indian race, living or dead, will be reunited upon a regenerated earth, to live a life of aboriginal happiness, forever free from death, disease and misery. On this each tribe has built a structure from its own mythology. All this is to be brought about, not through war, but by an overruling spiritual power. Some apostles here even declare that all race distinctions are to be obliterated and the whites are to participate with the Indians in the coming felicity. Different dates are assigned to the coming of the millennium. From the Cheyenne and Arapaho delegates Mr. Mooney obtained a letter containing a message or statement of doctrine delivered to them by Wovoka in 1891, and written down on the spot by one of the Arapaho delegates. Casper Edson, a young man who had acquired some English education at the government Indian school at Carlisle. Mr. Mooney highly extols the moral code inculcated as pure and comprehensive in its simplicity, and states that the prophet has given these people a better religion than they ever had before, taught them precepts which, if faithfully carried out, will bring them in better accord with their white neighbors, and has prepared the way for their final Christianization.

He has traced the progress of the doctrine through the various tribes of the United States, and gives an approximate statement as to the area of the dance and the number of Indians involved. According to the latest official reports, there are about 146,000 Indians west of the Mississippi river, exclusive of the five civilized nations in Indian Territory. Probably all of these tribes heard of the new doctrine, but only a part took an active interest in it. Some thirty or thirty-five tribes, more or less concerned, have an aggregate population of about 60,000 souls. A number were practically unanimous in accepting the new doctrine, notably the Paiute, Shoshoni, Arapaho, Cheyenne, Caddo and Pawnee, while of others, as the Comanche, only a small minority ever engaged. Only about one-half of the 26,000 Sioux took an active part in it. It may be safely said, however, that the doctrine and ceremony of the ghost dance found more adherents among our tribes than any other similar religious movement within the historic movement, except possibly the crusade led by the Shawano prophet in 1805. Among most of these tribes the movement is already extinct, having died a natural death, excepting in the case of the Sioux. The Sioux probably discontinued the dance before the final surrender, as the subsequent events convinced even the most fanatical believers that their expectations of invulnerable ability and supernatural assistance were deceptive.

The Paiutes were yet dancing a year ago, and as their dream has received no such rude awakening as among the Sioux, they are probably still patiently awaiting the great deliverance in spite of repeated postponements, although the frenzied earnestness of the early period has long abated. The Kiowas have recently taken up the dance again and are dancing as religiously as ever under the leadership of the old men, although the progressive element in the tribe is strongly opposed to it.

Among the other tribes in Oklahoma the ghost dance has become a part of the tribal life, and it is still performed at frequent intervals, although the feverish expectation of a few years ago has now settled down into something closely approaching the Christian hope of a reunion with departed friends in a happier world at some time in the unknown future. As to Wovoka, the great Messiah, when last heard from he was on exhibition as one of the attractions of the Midwinter Fair in San Francisco.

A STRIKING POSE DURING THE DANCE.

NEW WOMAN IN CHINA.

Among the few almond-eyed standard-bearers of the mute new-born revolt against the subjection of Chinese womankind, Dr. Hu King Eng stands pre-eminent. Of her sex and race the first master of arts, the second doctor of medicine. Dr. Ya Mae Kin graduated in 1889, but without returning to the orient married Eca de Siloa, with whom she lives in Honolulu.

King Eng was born in Foochow to a heritage of wealth and aristocracy. Her grandfather, Hu, was a mandarin of influence. In the 70th year of his age he became a convert to the "Jesus doctrine," and with his two sons, Hu Po Mi and Hu Yong Mi—King Eng's father—both of whom for more than thirty years have been Methodist pastors and presiding elders. Soon grandmother Hu and her daughters-in-law, all of the bound-foot class, influenced by convincing, even coercive arguments, also reluctantly embraced the alien faith.

When quite a child King Eng was placed in the girl's boarding school at Foochow, where, in time, she developed into a thorough student, evincing marked artistic ability—an inherited talent. Furtive peeps into the dispensary and wards of the adjacent hospital, however, determinned effectually her vocation to be, not art, but medicine.

With that end in view the little high-caste celestial maid, now in her 15th year, came across the seas, having met and conquered bitter, determined opposition. She immediately entered the Ohio Wesleyan university, graduating four years later a master of arts. Three years more of study and the degree of doctor of medicine was conferred by the Woman's Medical college of Philadelphia, and also after a brief post-graduate course by the Philadelphia polyclinic. Then followed several months of practical work in the woman's hospital of Boston.

In December, 1895, Dr. Hu, full equipped for her life work, returned to Foochow to assume charge of Liangau hospital. A triumphant home-coming it was. Mandarins and coolies, high and low, met the ship, eager to pay their respects.

Her most prized successes, however, are not social but professionl. One instance is related of a coolie wheeling his blind old mother 1,000 miles in a wheelbarrow to consult the woman doctor. A double cataract operation, and the blind was made to see.

The only son of a wealthy mandarin was dumb from his birth and so of no account—disqualified to worship before the manes of his ancestors. The tied tongue once relieved and the dumb made to talk! Hence the name and the fame of the "miracle lady."

The Hotchkiss Machine Gun.

We have heard much of the Maxim machine gun within the last year or two, during which little wars with savage men have brought that terrible engine of slaughter into prominence. But the Maxim is now eclipsed by the new Hotchkiss machine gun, which is said to be more efficient in action, to require no water jacket to cool its barrel, and to consist of much fewer component parts. The new gun is made in three types; for field, mountain, or naval use; it weighs about thirty-three pounds, and can fire single cartridges or rain them upon an enemy at the rate of five hundred per minute. The weapon has an ordinary steel barrel, with a second closed barrel beneath it, the two being connected by a small hole not far from the muzzle. When the bullet passes this hole, part of the gas generated by the charge passes through, and drives back a piston in the lower barrel. This piston throws out the empty cartridges, inserts a new one, and fires the gun, and so the action goes on so long as the piece is fed with cartridges.

Dr. Poland's Hypnotized Rooster.

A Bloomington, Ill., paper asserts that Dr. B. I. Poland, of Danville, has a bantam rooster that is addicted to hypnotic manifestations. After looking intently at a revolving wind mill the chicken starts in pursuit of the shadow of its tail, and finally falls over in a cataleptic fit, and is for a time apparently lifeless.

THE MATHEMATICAL GOAT.

His Wonderful Feats of Calculation or Instinct.

Almost every movement of a kid proves the mountain origin of its race. Its powers of climbing are extraordinary and must be witnessed to be believed. I have seen them clamber on slippery roofs and up the almost perpendicular face of a quarry to places which seemed impossible to reach without the aid of a ladder, or the clinging power of claws or fingers, says a writer in Blackwood's Magazine. I remember once seeing a pair of kids running races up and down the shafts of a disused farm-roller which were tilted up at an angle of about 45 degrees. On the extreme ends of the shafts, high in the air, the little creatures would stand, one on each, and turn about, as on a pivot, with the tips of all four hooflets close enough together to rest on a penny piece. Such fears on the part of a goat are far more artistic exhibitions of skill in climbing than anything that can be done by a cat or a monkey, for he does everything by calculating his distance with absolute exactitude and by an infinitely delicate power of adjusting his weight so as to maintain his balance. What gives such finish to the performance is his sublime confidence in himself and the extraordinary precision with which every movement is executed. His judgment is so perfect that he scarcely ever makes a mistake. Necessity has been his grim schoolmaster, for it is, of course, easy to see that when leaping from ledge to ledge along the face of a precipice the least error in calculating either his distance or the amount of muscular force to be exercised would instantly prove fatal. This is a branch of the study of natural history which has a peculiar fascination for me, and which, the more I think of it, fills me with admiration and amazement. What a mathematician the goat would make if he could only tell us the process by means of which he performs his feats. A senior wrangler of a Smith's prizeman would be nowhere beside him. Let me endeavor, briefly, to point out the nature of certain problems which he is in the habit of solving with absolute accuracy at a moment's notice. Supposing a goat, following a new path, has to take a leap so as to alight on a pinnacle or narrow crag overhanging some abyss. First of all he must estimate the distance to be traversed, and, having got it, whether by trigonometry or by some capricious method of his own, he has next to compute, to the fraction of an ounce, how much propulsive force is required to project his body (the exact weight of which has to be taken into account) precisely that distance, and not a quarter of an inch further. Moreover, he must take into calculation whether the spot he wishes to reach is above or below his starting point, and plainly his brain, when it sends forth motor impulses to the numerous muscles involved, must beforehand reckon and apportion to each its share in the task. At the same moment he must also estimate the exact proportionate amount of muscular force which will be required in each of his limbs to stop and balance his body on his new and precarious foothold. Of course, one need scarcely say that the whole process goes on without reaching the consciousness of the goat, or anything that could, even by courtesy, be called his mind. But, nevertheless, it is obvious that, in some way or other, the calculation is made, and is completed in a time and with an unerring accuracy which completely puts to shame the mathematical triumphs of the human intellect.

A Story of John Bright.

The Lord Primate of Ireland writes: I was told by a friend of the great orator Bright—a name never to be mentioned without respect—that one day he was speaking with an old friend of his school career. He had been at two schools, in one of which he had learned a great deal that was useful and necessary for his position in life, and in the other he had been taught to love reading, and had been brought in contact with Milton's book, and this friend say, "You seem to think far more of the second school than of the first, and I know you learned a great deal that was useful in the one, and I should think not nearly so much in the other. "But," said Bright, "you don't know anything about it. In the first school I learned what helped me no doubt in my business, but in the other I was brought into contact with the eternal spirit of liberty, and that was the thing that made me whatever I have been in life."

Was He a New York Giant?

First Baseball Player—I am tired of this hard luck. I wish things would begin to come my way. Second Baseball Player—You'd muff 'em if they did.

Food for Reflection.

Rev. Mr. Longlipp (anxiously)—How did you like my substitute's sermon last Sunday, Deacon? Deacon Bluntleigh—It was a treat.

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Jacob Ruffly, aged seventy, of Wilkes Barre, stole a loaf of bread. Mayor Nichols sentenced him to imprisonment until he ate the loaf. In four hours Jacob ate his way to freedom.

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Japan is a corruption of the Chinese word Shi-pen-kue, which means "root of day," of "sunrise kingdom," because Japan is directly east of China.

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