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SNAKE DANCES OF THE MOKIS!

The Weird Ceremonials as Described By G. Wharton James.

MOKIS FONDLING THE POISONOUS REPTILES.

"Few of even the well informed people of the United States know of the wonderful and peculiar customs and habits of life of the various races of people within our own borders. There are facts so surprising in connection with the ceremonies and even the every-day life of some Indian tribes that if travelers to far countries were to see them as I have seen them, they would be heralded as the most barbarous spectacles of the age. I have witnessed the war dance, the ghost dance, and seven times I have seen the thrilling snake dance of the Moki or Moqui Indians in Arizona. Let me tell you of the snake dance of the Mokis, about which little is known."

G. Wharton James of Pasadena, Cal., lecturer, promoter, literary man, antiquarian, amateur photographer, ethnologist and a deep student of the Indian race, was talking to a reporter for the Kansas City Star in his room at the Ridgedale Savoy while he was here delivering lectures on Klondike from the material furnished by J. J. Clements, a returned Klondiker of Los Angeles, who, not being fitted for lecturing, engaged Mr. James to do the talking. The gentleman produced and untied a package containing two Indian bowls made of rushes, between which were a half hundred photographs and which he prepared to illustrate his talk.

ONLY TWO MEN KNOW THE SECRETS.

"There are only two white men who have ever witnessed the nine days of secret ceremonials preceding the snake dance," continued Mr. James. "Dr. Walter Fewkes of the Smithsonian institution is one, and I am the other. How did we arrange that? We both became members of the secret orders which perform these ceremonies. Dr. Fewkes is a member of the order of Antelope men and I am both an Antelope and a Snake man. Of course, they trust us or we never would have become members. I have worked among the Indians for ten years. I have camped in their villages for weeks at a time, and I have worked for three years to get a single photograph—one of a certain young woman and her mother. I go unarmed across the big reservation of the nomadic Navajoes, and they know. I carry no weapons, but I am as safe there as I am in Kansas City. I am their friend.

THE MOKI INDIANS.

"But first you must understand the nature of the Moki Indians," said Mr. James, as he took up a dozen large unmounted photographs. These pictures needed no explanation. The Mokis are cliff dwellers. Boys go absolutely naked until well in their teens. Then they wear a cloth which is scantier than a breech clout. The women are fully attired in dresses, which they weave themselves and which they will not sell for less than $12 each. The men have great bushy hair that hangs before their eyes to their chins in front, and the old people's faces are horribly wrinkled. Mr. James says the wrinkles are caused by their hard life.

"There are seven villages of the Moki tribe," continued the narrator. "They are built upon three rocky plateaus which jut out like peninsulas into the mesa. Some of their villages are no more than a quarter of a mile apart, yet they are under separate rule and entirely distinct from each other. The nearest to a white settlement is Walpi, and, though people have gone the twenty miles to see the snake dance at this village, I doubt if more than 200 persons ever witnessed the spectacle. Certainly none saw it at any other place than Walpi, though I have witnessed it at Orabi, several hundred miles further from civilization. Every village has its Snake men and its Antelope men, who give the dance for their village.

CATCHING THE SNAKES.

"No, it is extremely difficult to find out when the ceremonials preceding the dance are going to be held. Only the priests of the order know that. But, as I am a member of the orders, there is an Indian runner who sets out for the nearest telegraph station when the time approaches, to notify me to come on. The last time I went I spent six weeks among the Mokis. I witnessed and took part in the nine days of ceremonies."

Mr. James had become intensely interested in his subject. He stroked his heavy black beard and waved his hands in gesticulation.

"Part of the ceremonies consists in catching the snakes. These thirty or so Antelope or Snake men secure from 150 to 200 rattlers, red racers, bull snakes and other kinds. Do they remove their poison? If you should ask that of a Snake or an Antelope man it would be as sacrilegious as to say a Catholic priest does not put a wafer on the tongue, but only the pressure of his finger. They do not remove the fangs or the poison. The snakes are put in bowls and taken to the kiva, which is an underground cavern where the secret ceremonies are held. It is lighted by the hole through which one descends to the kiva by a ladder.

"The washing of the snakes is the most interesting of these performances. Upon the afternoon before the evening of the snake dance, the priests and members of the order descend to the kiva. Upon this occasion at Walpi I went with them. I saw there the altar, of which I succeeded in getting a photograph. It is made of sands of different colors surrounded by prayer feathers on sticks, and trophies of the tribe. The men removed their breech cloths and were entirely naked. I note no moral affront. I sat beside the high priests of the snakes and Antelope priests and kneeled into a large bowl and offered it three times to the gods—the north then the west, then south, then east. That is the order of the cardinal points with them. He dresses of our custom. If a man takes a cigarette he must breathe the smoke north, west, south, east, up and down to their order.

WASHING THE SNAKES.

"After filling the bowl with water from a sacred spring the men who had the snakes in baskets handed them to each of the high priests. They took them regardless without special regard to where they caught them and seized them in the water, at the same time beginning a monotonous, weird, humming song, in which the others joined and which increased in volume as they washed the snakes until, working themselves into a frenzy, at the pitch of their excitement the priests hurled the snakes from them to the altar and the men bellowed out ten cries in unison. You can believe that, sitting where these shouts were literally poured into my ears, the sudden outbreak and the hurling of the snakes nearly made me jump out of my skin.

"When the snakes which had been thrown slightly on the rude altar, two men whose duty it was, tried to sift them into the sand with sticks. This same procedure was gone through with until all the snakes had been washed and thrown upon the sand, with aromic pattering hair raising yells, and then those who had been stirring them into the sand stopped. While the reptiles were crawling all about the kiva, over bare legs and bodies, no notice was taken of them. A rattlesnake twisted its slippery way across me. I saw its fangs and I know they were not removed. I was not afraid because the Indians were not. Dr. Fewkes was terribly in fear of the snakes when he witnessed the ceremonials.

THE REAL DANCE.

"Finally, the things were allowed to become quiescent. They were put into a basket and placed inside the kist, which is a bunch of sticks or willows bound about the bottom with canvas and placed about fifty yards from the opening of the kiva. The high priest is also in the willows and it is about this object that the dance, which last but thirty minutes, is done.

"We came out of the kiva about 3 o'clock, and the first dance always begins at sundown. First came the march of the antelopes and the march of the snakes. Imagine the scene. These Moki men, now made up for the dance, with zigzag streaks of white paint on their bodies to represent lightning, some parts of their persons screened by the different uniforms of the two orders, surrounded by the people of the village, with representatives from other villages, and a few white spectators, marching to the weird humming of their songs. They swing round the clump of willows, stamping on a certain board as a signal to the gods below and casting sacred meal, which formed a part of the altar in the kiva, upon it.

THE END OF THE DANCE.

"The two orders face each other. Some are given snakes, which they put between their teeth, holding the tail with one hand and allowing the head to swing free. They are followed by those with snake whips of feathers. Then they surround the clump of sticks, it is torn to bits, the snakes are cast upon the ground in a heap and the men grab for them as they squirm about their bare legs and feet. Horrible, isn't it? Yet so little fear do these Mokis show that they are supposed to pick up the same snakes which they caught. They then run to place which have been assigned to them, cast the snakes on the ground, pray over them and return."

As Mr. James recounted each of these successive steps he showed photographs illustrating everything from holding the snakes between the teeth to grabbing handfuls of the reptiles in the general scramble after they were turned loose.

"But that isn't the end," resumed the student of Indian customs. "When the men return they descend to the kiva, where every one, whether he has been bitten or not, drinks a gallon of an antidote prepared by the priests, the composition of which is known only to them. It is an emetic, and the snakes and Antelopes are immediately seen hanging over the cliffs in their sickness and looking intently at the rocks below. After their sickness they return again to the kiva, where the women serve them with Moki delicacies, and the snake dance of the village, which comes once in the year, is at an end. The gods are appeased."

The pictures he showed cost Mr. James an acquaintanceship of years to procure, so opposed are the Mokis to the art of photography. When he went to the last snake dance James took presents of candy and the like to nearly every one in the village, that they might be more friendly than ever to him. The result was that he then took the first picture ever secured of Wiki of the village of Walpi, a wrinkled old savage of 80 years, who is the dominating spirit of the snake dance, not only in Walpi, but among the entire tribe.

"He might be called the father of the dance, except that it was originated centuries ago," said the western man in speaking of Wiki.

To be Deported.

Jew Lem Hen, one of the three Chinamen arrested on the charge of being illegally in the United States, had his hearing before United States Court Commissioner Burkhart this afternoon, with the result that he will be returned to the Oriental kingdom before many days. Jew claimed to have been in this country six years, but could not speak a word of English. He told a tale at variance with a paper in his possession and the commissioner decided that he had just come to the country.

Long Moin Cher will have his hearing at 10 a. m. to-morrow. Quo Yen will not have his hearing until January 20, when Judge Lee will appear for him.

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THE FAMOUS SANTA FE TRAIL!

Its Story Is Told at Last, Fitly and Graphically Portrayed.

COL. HENRY INMAN'S NEW BOOK.

Col. Henry Inman's latest and most important contribution to the chronicles of the great west, "The Old Santa Fe Trail; the Story of a Great Highway," has just been issued by the Macmillan company, New York and London. William F. Cody ("Buffalo Bill") contributes to it a friendly and interesting introduction.

It would be difficult to enumerate all the people, especially in Missouri, Kansas and so on through plain and mountain to the western ocean, who will be pleased to hear that the story of the old "trail" has been brought out by a great publishing house, and with all the resources of the bookmaker's art in a volume of 550 perfectly printed pages, with covers adorned with the flowering cactus and the buffalo head, embellished by the pluck and illustrated by the artist of the camp, the match and the prairie, Frederick Remington.

Those interested in the story of the Santa Fe Trail, and there are many thousands of them—will feel deeply gratified that the task of being the historian of the old highway has fallen upon Henry Inman, than whom no man ever knew the "trail" better. Who followed it as a soldier in the old days of war and peace, and who, in later years, has twice where it once passed recalling its location, collecting its traditions, preserving its history.

The old army, a term applied to the regular army of the United States, as it existed prior to the war, may be said to have had in its care and custody, first the trans-Mississippi and later the trans-Missouri country. Army officers were its first explorers and their names stud the map of the farther west in the appellations of forts, rivers, mountain ranges and peaks, canyons and passes, plains and mesas. The army was first the repository of all the information collected concerning the immense country west of the Missouri and southward to the gulf, and the wild people who inhabited it. The soldier preceded even the trapper, the pioneer and the missionary. The army officer was the first pathfinder and road builder. He, first of white men, met the Indian, whether for peace or war, as the latter chose. To the "old army," thus described Colonel Inman belonged, and in its service he acquired such knowledge and met such experience as could have come in no other way. On long marches, in solitary camps, in siege and battle, at forts and trading posts, in settler's cabins and Indian tepees, in the story teller's group, in the sutler's store, riding beside the scout, the trapper, the teamster, white, Indian, Mexican, on their journeys bent, he learned the story of the "Santa Fe Trail."

Colonel Inman begins the story of the Santa Fe trail at its oldest end, at Santa Fe, which has the advantage of being several hundred years older than Independence, Westport and Kansas City, and the introduction and the first two chapters are devoted to Santa Fe, its early history and the very beginning of its commerce.

In the third chapter we know by seeing ing the name of Auguste Chouteau that we have reached the modern time, within the memory of men, a few, at least, now living, when localities in the far west began to take on names, as "Chouteau's island" in the Arkansaw river, which bears the name even unto this day. In time the scene is shifted from Santa Fe to Independence, and the Missouri border, and the wonderful "trade" is described in all its features as the trail, at first, in fact, a trail for pack animals, became a wagon road, where the trains of the freighters took the place of the lines of loaded mules. All this story of a great and growing traffic and exchange between the United States and the States of Mexico is given with minuteness, and forms the first complete collection of the facts in book form made since the publication of a now old and scarce work, Gregg's "Commerce of the Prairie." The chapters recording these days are full of the rumble of wheels, the cracking of whips, the cries of the teamsters, and we see them on their winding way.

The Mexican war brought the Santa Fe trail into new and greater prominence, and ended by making Santa Fe an American town and the "trail" an entirely United States institution. The events of the Mexican war which affected the "trail" or occurred in its vicinity are graphically described, as are, later, the troubles at Glorieta, Valverde and other points growing out of the civil war.

The existence of the "trail" called out as it were all classes and conditions of men that had been before known, with some new varieties—mountain men, voyagers, guides, trappers, traders, soldiers, men who journeyed along the trail, men who kept stations at intervals; men who built forts and named them after themselves; a great variety of complexions and races, but all alike in one particular—a love of adventure and an apparent indifference to its possible or probable consequences. With a host of these men Colonel Inman was an acquaintance; with many he was a dear and close friend, sharing oft the narrow blanket and the scanty meal when the days were perilous, and hard, and the best in the land when better times had come. The book is dedicated to the Hon. William F. Cody, "Buffalo Bill," as a "tribute to a generous nature and a noble manhood," and the roll of the brave is called to the end. Kit Carson, Lucien M. Maxwell, Colonel "Uncle" John Smith, and others, Dick Wootton, Jim Bridger, James Hobbs and a great array. The stories of these men, told often to the campfire in lonely glades in the midnight wilderness, without other thought than to while away the hours, are given in these pages.

There is much to say in this work of the American in man in the wild state, a person who from present appearances will soon pass beyond the reach of the biographer who knew him, and the historian who based his theories on personal acquaintance with the facts. The plains Indians commenced to attack the travelers on the Santa Fe trail in the earliest day, the only thing holding back the incidental amusement. Later on and kept it up until the transfer of a large number of Indians to a home beyond the sky with their faithful dogs to beat them company, rendered further hostile operations impracticable. In the author's opinion of the Indian is that he is a red devil, an opponent of the natural, a proper target for the rifle, a fiend to be mangled, scalped, tortured bodies of men and women transfixed with arrows, lying awful amid the ashes of their cabins. The opportunities of the author of "The Santa Fe Trail" to study the Indian were ample and the fidelity of his descriptions of Indian nature is only equalled by those of Frances Parkman, who was, however, brought into actual contact with real Indians for but a few weeks, while the experiences alluded to in the story of a great highway, extended through long years. The Indian here is painted in all his savagery as he comes sounding his hideous war whoop, and as he comes again his hands still stained with the blood of the helpless, to play good and eat the white man's bread. The pictures of Indians here given by the writer are like those of an artist taken from life. Satank, Satanta, Lone Wolfe, bad Indians, and all are here sketched and with them an almost pathetic story of Kicking Bird, who from being the white man's enemy became his friend and strove to save his Indian brethren from themselves and was at last poisoned at the instigation of his own people, dying with the peculiar and unique distinction of being a good Indian.

Another of the old "trail" is sketched in this eventful history, to-wit: the buffalo. In several places the artist gives portraits of the wild cattle, not as they figure in pictures by artists who never saw the brute, but the big, stupid, sun burned, horn-gored, wind-tanned buffalo, with his frontlet filled with burs and clay. Here, as we read, comes back the buffalo, as when, in the autumn of 1868 the author rode in company with Generals Sheridan, Custer, Sully and others through continuous herds of them for three days. The buffalo, passing across the Kansas Pacific track in the spring of 1869, delayed a railroad train from 9 o'clock in the morning until 5 o'clock in the evening—and now he is gone. Here kit Carson and Buffalo Bill Cody tell stories of hunting, and occasionally being hunted by buffalo, stories never again to be repeated in this country. The march of the buffaloes on the epluribus unum plan—one great herd being composed of many smaller herds, each with its leader, but all moving in the same general direction, are described. The sentries are posted around the outside of the grazing mass, as in an army. The outposts are alarmed, the sentinels go running to the center, the leaders take up their position in front, the cows and calves crowd to the center, the males gather on the flanks and rear, and the wild cattle of the plains stand to their defense.

While the title of Colonel Inman's work would seem to limit it to the story of the one long road from the Missouri river to Santa Fe, it is a valuable contribution to the general history of the country. It gives many details and particulars of the Mexican war, the civil war and of the campaigns of Generals Sheridan, Hancock, Custer, Sully and others against the Indians, events and men of national interest.

The story, too, is most interesting and valuable as giving the beginnings of empire. The scene begins to shift before the story closes, and the star of empire is up and shining. The difference between the American white man and the American red man is that the former comes to stay. The Indian pitches his lodge to suit his present need or fancy and moves it according to his vagrant fancy, but when the white man makes his trail it is to be traveled till a better and wider road takes its place. When he builds any habitation, no matter how rude a hack, a dugout, a cabin, a house of boards, he builds for his heirs, inheritors and assigns forever. Along the Santa Fe trail were sown from the first the seed corn of settlements, towns and cities. Long before the Santa Fe traders ceased their wagon journeys they found themselves in eastern Kansas traveling from town to town, and one day they looked back and lo, the locomotive was following them. All this story of transition is told in this one volume.

The story of the great highway ends with the arrival of the railroad in Santa Fe. Says the writer: "It was the beginning of the end. On the 19th of February, 1880, the first train on the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe railroad arrived at Santa Fe and the old Trail as a route of commerce was closed forever. The once great highway is now only a picture in the memory of the few who have traveled its weary course, following the windings of the silent trickling rills to the portals of the rugged pathway leading on to the shores of the Upper Platte.

One looking out over the great plains through which the Trail ran would the earliest way [illegible] believed that nothing of human effort could ever change the landscape. Yet with the cessation of the wagon trains and the abandonment of the "Trail" as a thing just established, a change began. In where the [illegible] battle. The rails took the place of the ceaseless buffeting of the roadbed. Well man to wage and the [illegible] sides not readily reached by the plow. The old wagon trains [illegible] show travelers on [illegible] roaming train [illegible] Santa Fe [illegible] has gone [illegible] wind and [illegible] the buffalo herds [illegible] the Santa Fe trail [illegible] the old [illegible] the mental amusement. [illegible] and kept it up until the transfer of a large number of Indians to a home beyond the sky with their faithful dogs to beat them company, rendered further hostile operations impracticable. [illegible] Inman's opinion of the Indian is that he is a red devil, an opponent of the natural, a proper target for the rifle, a fiend to be mangled, scalped, tortured bodies of men and women transfixed with arrows, lying awful amid the ashes of their cabins. The opportunities of the author of "The Santa Fe Trail" to study the Indian were ample and the fidelity of his descriptions of Indian nature is only equalled by those of Frances Parkman, who was, however, brought into actual contact with real Indians for but a few weeks, while the experiences alluded to in the story of a great Highway, extended through long years. The Indian here is painted in all his savagery as he comes sounding his hideous war whoop, and as he comes again his hands still stained with the blood of the helpless, to play good and eat the white man's bread. The pictures of Indians here given by the writer are like those of an artist taken from life. Satank, Satanta, Lone Wolfe, bad Indians, and all are here sketched and with them an almost pathetic story of Kicking Bird, who from being the white man's enemy became his friend and strove to save his Indian brethren from themselves and was at last poisoned at the instigation of his own people, dying with the peculiar and unique distinction of being a good Indian.

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