

ANTHROPOLOGICAL PAPERS OF THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

VOL. XVI, PART IV

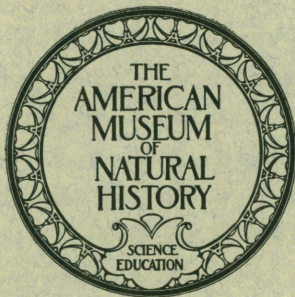
Notes on the Sun Dance of the Sarsi. By Pliny Earle Goddard.

The Sun Dance of the Plains-Cree. By Alanson Skinner.

Notes on the Sun Dance of the Cree in Alberta. By Pliny Earle Goddard.

The Sun Dance of the Canadian Dakota. By W. D. Wallis.

Notes on the Sun Dance of the Sisseton Dakota. By Alanson Skinner.



NEW YORK
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1919

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

Publications in Anthropology

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NOTES ON THE SUN DANCE OF THE SARSI

By PLINY EARLE GODDARD

THE SUN DANCE OF THE SARSI

The information here given concerning the Sarsi sun dance was secured in 1905 on a joint expedition for the University of California and the American Museum of Natural History. A fairly complete, if condensed, running account of the sun dance was recorded as a text in Sarsi and has been published.¹ This text is accompanied by word for word translation in English. The text itself was dictated by Eagle-ribs who was probably born about 1840, a younger son of the head chief of the Natsit'inna, one of the four Sarsi bands. He was a particularly trustworthy informant, highly respected by both whites and Indians. His exploits as a warrior, probably in the Cree rebellion of 1884-1885, entitled him to the first place among the warriors in reciting the coups during the sun dance and on special occasions.

In addition to this text, secured of course without questions or promptings of any sort, the account was considerably amplified by questions, the answers to which were recorded in English. The following account has been put together from the above-mentioned recorded material.

The ceremony² was held when such wild fruits as chokecherries and saskatoon berries were ripe. This would be in late July or early August. It was probably held annually, although the conditions of vowing the dance mentioned below theoretically permit its being held only when a special occasion demanded it.

The place selected was in or near tall timber, not too far from the regular camping place occupied at that season of the year. It was once held on the north side of Elbow River downstream from the wagon-road bridge south of Calgary. Tall timber in the Sarsi country would ordinarily be found only in the neighborhood of a stream.

The structures required for the celebration of the sun dance were the following:—

A sweatlodge was built before work was begun on the sun dance lodge itself and, from the order of the narrative, apparently before the camp was moved to the site chosen for the sun dance. For the building of this sweatlodge one hundred willow³ poles were required. Young men went out on horseback for these and as each one returned with his stick

¹"Sarsi Texts" (*University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology*, vol. XI, no. 3, Berkeley, 1915), 192-197.

²The Sarsi name, *tsisdai'wvu'*, perhaps refers to the lodge as "twined."

³Willow in Canada is not a very definite term but the comment, "long leaved ones which grow on the river" clearly indicates a *salix*.

he held it up and sang a song. The information indicates that one hundred young men went out, each coming back with a single stick. However, the size of the Sarsi tribe makes it doubtful if this requirement could be literally carried out. The sweatlodge, when built of these poles, was said to be of the size of one standing in the Sarsi camp at the time the information was given. It was therefore not of unusual size. The poles, after being set in the ground, were bent toward the center where their tops were interwoven. After this was done red paint was applied to them. One hundred stones were provided for use in this sweatlodge. To receive them a square hole was excavated.

The dance lodge consisted of a central post or good-sized tree set about four feet into the ground. A circle of forked posts surrounded this central post but a considerable opening was left toward the east. From the forked tops of these encircling posts long poles sloped upward and rested near the top of the center post. Finally, branches, or small trees, with the leaves still on them, were leaned against the outside of the structure. The trees employed for these various parts were poplar.¹

Within the main lodge and directly back of the central post a small enclosure was made for the seclusion of one or more men during the ceremony. This structure was horseshoe-shaped, made of small poplar trees stuck in the ground and left standing straight up, there being no roof except that of the main lodge. The grass within this booth was all removed, the space leveled off and covered with white earth² from the river bank.

A similar lodge was constructed within the dance lodge, just to the north of the one last mentioned, for the use of those who elected to undergo torture. When this lodge was occupied a blanket was hung before the entrance which faced the east. The Sarsi tipis were arranged in a circle around the sun dance lodge. This camp circle was said to be irregular in form and without special order as to the positions occupied by those who camped in it.³ The tipi of the woman and her husband who were giving the sun dance stood to the west of the sun dance lodge and, according to a diagram, practically in the center of the camp circle. Directly north of this tipi stood the lodge of the *likuwz*, dogs; and north of this

¹There are at least two species which are common, a black poplar locally called balm of gilead, and the aspen.

²White leaf mold is probably meant since the notes say the material was not sand or clay.

³At the time this information was secured it was not known that the Sarsi consisted of four separate bands. Therefore, no questions were asked as to the positions of these bands in the camp circle or whether each band camped by itself.

the lodge of the *nagultcosna*, preventers; and sometimes, still further north, the lodge of the *tasgilna*, police. The three societies mentioned preserved order during the sun dance ceremony.¹

The persons who conducted the sun dance and participated in it belonged to several categories more or less unrelated. First of all was the woman on whose initiative the ceremony was held as is related in the published text (p. 193). Some woman whose husband or other close relative was very ill made a vow. She promised to give the sun dance if the person who was ill, recovered. Such a vow would not be taken by a woman whose character was not above reproach. Her appeal to the sun was based on the premise of absolute faithfulness to her husband. If a woman taking such a vow had ever been unfaithful it was believed that her husband would not recover. It may be assumed that the converse would also hold; that is, if the vow were taken and the husband did not recover the presumption would be that the misfortune resulted because the woman's life had not been faultless. Even after the ceremony had taken place any irregularity in her conduct would result in her early death. The vow to give a sun dance and its accomplishment was a marked distinction for the woman concerned. The mother of the interpreter employed, Charlie Crow-chief, had given the sun dance four times, and this fact was mentioned with very great pride.²

Associated with the woman, was her husband, who shared the duties and honors of the occasion. The hair, face, hands, and clothing, including the moccasins of the pair were painted a dark red and remained so during the five days of the ceremony. During four days the couple remained sitting in their tipi without food and drinking only a little water.

A married woman of good character, familiar with the sun dance, was employed to make a prayer and the offering when the buffalo tongues were eaten. Other women who were acquainted with the sun dance were asked to assist in cutting the tongues. The text (p. 193) indicates that the woman who offered the tongue makes a declaration of her complete fidelity, but that the other women did so is not stated.

A middle-aged man spent the four days of the ceremony in the small inner lodge of the sun dance mentioned above. He was required to

¹Compare this series, vol. 11, 467-469.

²She was the wife of the second chief of the *Natsilt'inna*, one of the Sàrsi bands.

fast during the ceremony, being allowed a little water but no food. He remained constantly in the enclosure, sleeping there at night and only leaving it for the relieving of urgent calls of nature.¹

An aged man was chosen² to make the prayers at the sweatlodge ceremony and other elderly men were invited to take the sweatbath with him. Eagle-ribs said that he had never been in the sweatlodge on this occasion since he was not old enough to be invited when the sun dance was last given.

Two young men cut the thong with which the nest was secured to the center post. Before doing so they related the circumstances of scalping an enemy and it is to be inferred that they must have such coups to their credit. A statement that they or their relatives paid horses or clothing to those who last performed this duty indicates a transference of this office by purchase.

The warriors of the tribe came into the sun dance lodge daily and recited their exploits,³ acting them out with the aid of their wives.

Young men who had taken vows to do so underwent torture during the ceremony. It is stated that in a crisis, when in danger on the war-path or at other times when help was needed, a young man would take a solemn vow that if his petitions were answered he would permit himself to be "tied up" at the next celebration of the sun dance.

The men who prepared these candidates for the torture and who assisted them must themselves have been tied up on a previous occasion.

The young men who brought in the material for the sweatlodge have been referred to above. They were rewarded for this service by a special participation in the feast of the buffalo tongues.

Those assembled for the celebration were policed or directed by two or three of the Sarsi societies, the placing of whose tipis has been mentioned above. The same informant, in 1911, when asked about the various societies, denied that it was the duty of anyone of them to bring in the center post.

The objects employed in the ceremony are only incidentally mentioned. As far as noted, they are the following:—

The "bundle" of the Sarsi sun dance may be referred to in the text (p. 193) where it is said "they give them (the vower of the dance and her

¹The words of the text are not quite clear in regard to the number of men occupying the enclosure. Supplementary notes indicate that there was only one man. Big-plume was said to be the only Sarsi living in 1905 who had performed this office.

²"They pick out some old man each time; there is no name for him," was the comment. "They, the woman and her relatives, give him something, horses."

³Such men rank as chiefs according to Sarsi estimation.

husband) the first sun dance clothes." The hat or hats are referred to in the text; and a cane painted red is hung with the hats behind the couple in their tipi during the four days they spend in fasting. The hat is described as being made of large plumes. The husband, it is stated, has only a crow's tail tied to the side of his head. This may or may not be taken in a sense which excludes the possession of a regular ceremonial hat. The cane, if a woman's, would be identical with the digging stick, both being called *tis*; it is very probable the same implement served the double purpose. The mother of Charlie Crow-chief gave her dress, perhaps the entire bundle, to a daughter of George Hudson, government interpreter for many years on the Sarcee Reservation.

One hundred buffalo tongues were required for offerings and for a feast. Many offerings were made of clothing, cloth, moccasins, and similar objects, which were attached to the center post and other parts of the lodge. Drums and hollow bone whistles were used throughout the ceremony. Pipes were in constant demand as accompaniments of the numerous prayers which were offered from day to day.

It would appear from the accounts that the sun dance itself had a duration of seven days, three days for the construction of the lodge and four days for the ceremony itself. This period evidently does not include the day devoted to the building of the sweatlodge and to the sweatlodge ceremony. It was at first supposed that the sweatlodge ceremony directly preceded the construction of the sun dance lodge, but a careful interpretation of the text narrative indicates that the sweatlodge was built before the camp moved to the site chosen for the sun dance.

The first day is called *tsisda'uwa sinnis*, "sun dance day." This is the day on which the forked posts and the long poles are cut and brought to the place chosen for the lodge. On the second day the center post is cut, brought to the site, and erected. It is called *iwus natsitditsa sinnis*, "legs stuck up its day." This indicates that the material gathered on the first is not put in place until the second day. The third day is called *nitsidinila sinnis*, "they finish building day," when the branches are all up around the outside of the lodge. The fourth day is called *kukacina sinnis*, "they go in day." On that and the following days the ceremonies proper take place.¹ Although the narrative and notes are not clear it may be inferred that the "givers of the dance" fast and are in control for five days, one of which precedes those named above and

¹A note says there was one day for the sweatlodge and four for the dance.

during which the sweatlodge is built. The four days during which the man fasts in the inner booth must date from the completion of the dance lodge and continues three days at least after the last day assigned a name above. However, the last day of the fast of the givers and the first day of the fast of the secluded man may coincide.

The activities of the ceremony given briefly by Eagle-ribs are as follows:—

A woman of good character, capable of giving the sun dance vowed that she would give the ceremony in case her husband or other relative who was sick recovered. Some time in advance of the season for the sun dance, buffalo were hunted and one hundred tongues secured and stored in parfleches. When the time had arrived, young men went out on horseback and brought in one hundred small willow poles with which a dome-shaped sweatlodge was constructed. This had its doorway facing east. An old man, familiar with the proper prayers, was invited to conduct the sweatbath ceremonies in which other old men were invited to participate.

The woman who was giving the sun dance and her husband, were seated outside the sweatlodge, opposite its entrance. A young man, their attendant, came to them, for a pipe which he held ready filled while the chosen old man offered a prayer.¹ The young man then took the pipe to a nearby fire, lighted it, and returned it to the old man who conducted the ceremonial smoke. The sweatlodge was then covered with blankets and the hot stones passed in and deposited in the square excavation provided for them. A vessel of water with a dipper was also taken into the sweatlodge. Four dipperfuls of water were poured over the hot stones, songs sung, and prayers offered. About twenty prayers were recited during the sweatbathing ceremony.

Following the construction of the sweatlodge and the sweatbathing the buffalo tongues were distributed to those present. The young men who had supplied the material for the sweatlodge are especially mentioned as included in the feast. Before the feast one of the tongues was given to a virtuous woman by her husband. She held this tongue toward the sky and said: "Pity me my father, I have lived faithfully with my husband." She and her husband afterward ate the offered tongue.

The details of the securing of the center post are omitted in the text of the sun dance. It is described as having been brought to the site of the lodge and suspended by ropes, held on either side by mounted men.

¹Probably while seated in the sweatlodge.

The tree was not allowed to touch the earth while it was being brought in. It was raised to its position by means of pairs of poles lashed together at their tops. Before being raised, however, a nest of small willows "like a hawk's nest" was built. A buffalo skin was spread on the ground with its head toward the east. On this robe two young men sat while their relatives brought horses, clothing, and articles for offerings. The young men stood up with their knives in their hands and related how they had scalped Cree, their enemies. Drums were beaten and songs sung for them. They then proceeded to cut the buffalo skin into one long line with which the nest was securely lashed into place in the crotch of the tree which was to be the center post. The tail of the buffalo, left on one end of the long thong, hung down from the nest and to it a small nest was attached. Horses and clothing brought in by the relatives of the young men were given to the men who had cut the buffalo skin during the last preceding celebration. Considerable quantities of clothing, cloth, and similar objects were brought and attached to the nest and to the center post itself. When such an offering was brought a filled pipe was passed to some old man sitting by who prayed before the offering was made. At any time during the ceremony additional offerings could be brought. These were raised by means of poles and deposited in the nest or hung to some part of the lodge. One might climb up on the outside of the lodge, sit on the nest, say a prayer, and leave his offering. Mothers in particular were accustomed to offer the small, out-grown moccasins of their children.

The details of the ceremony proper are meager. The man who was secluded in the sun lodge arose whenever the drums were beaten, blew his whistle, and danced. When the drumming and singing ceased he again seated himself. It may be inferred that this dancing and singing was fairly continuous during certain portions of the day. It is mentioned that on various days different companies of men came in and danced. There is nothing, however, to indicate that these dances belonged to definite societies. About midday of each day the chiefs and warriors entered the lodge. They recited and acted out their exploits. Their wives brought them food which they ate while the less distinguished looked on.

If young men had taken vows to undergo torture the ordeal took place earlier in the morning. Not more than two men were "tied up" on any one day. They entered the enclosure prepared for them, divesting themselves of their clothing, except their breechcloths. Fillets of sage¹ were placed about their heads, ankles, and their wrists. Their

¹The Sarsi name given, *Puteidicaie*, "herb gray," is used of *Artemisia ludoviciana*, Nutt., a sage.

bodies were rubbed with a white clay. In addition to the breechcloths already mentioned, they wore belts and had whistles suspended about their necks.

When so adorned they came out into the main lodge and lay down on their backs on robes spread for them. Men chosen for the purpose, who themselves had undergone the ordeal, then proceeded to attach the thongs. The breasts of each young man were kneaded and he was asked whether the cut should be deep or shallow. The reply was always interpreted opposite to the words spoken. If the young man said "shallow" it was known that he wished a deep cut. The skin and flesh were drawn up and a cut made entirely through. In this a small stick was thrust. The attendant then went to the center post where two ropes hung from the top. These he secured with a loop, one over the stick in each breast.

The young men then arose, approached the post and, embracing it, offered a silent prayer. When they had prayed they came to their dancing position, looked up and crossed their arms four times on their breasts. They then pulled at the ropes jerking out and elongating the loops of skin. The singing then began and the young men danced toward the east and then toward the west going through a semicircle on the north side of the post so that they constantly faced the sun. They blew on their whistles and leaned back as they danced. If after long dancing they did not succeed in breaking the loop of skin their attendants took them by the shoulders, jerked them back, and tore the skin loose. The broken pieces of skin were cut free and placed as an offering at the base of the post by the man who cut the breasts and attached the thongs. The length of a man's life was believed to be proportional to the time consumed in dancing before the skin tore away.

When the four days were ended the camp circle was broken and the Indians moved away leaving the sun dance lodge with its offerings intact.

SWEATLODGE PRAYERS

Eagle-ribs, the informant, was able to give examples of some of the prayers used in the ceremony. In several instances, however, he was unable to furnish them because he himself had never performed the particular duty, or had not heard the prayers offered by others. It is not probable that the exact phraseology is prescribed. In fact many of the prayers are probably extemporized. These given below however are no doubt thoroughly typical.

1

Old man, father, may I be a person favored with a long and happy life. Have pity on me, father. May I live long on the earth and become an old man. May I live to see the hot sun rise, and may I experience happiness from you. May this woman with her husband reach old age. They have made your house and given you these tongues to eat.

2

Mother, pity me and all these people. Pity me. May I see you, whenever you appear as a full moon, for a long time. Oh! old woman, my mother, grant that my days may be long and happy. Pity me, my mother. Permit me to acquire property. Oh! old woman may I live to be old, together with my relatives.

3

Oh, old man, help me. A sweatlodge has been made for you. Oh, old man, a sweatlodge has been made for you, that you may help me. Help those who have given this sweatlodge and grant that they may become old men. Help me that I may again hear the thunder and voices of the birds. May I live happily here under the enclosing sky. Oh, father, pity me. May I live long on this island which you have made. Oh, my father, let my days continue to the end. Pity me, give me something to eat. Father, I am poor. Pity me and give me something.

It may be of interest to include here the "coups" of Eagle-ribs as dictated by him, probably in the form in which he was accustomed to recite them in the sun dance lodge.

The two tribes, Blackfoot and Sarsi, went to fight the Cree who had built and were occupying a fort. During the fight a Cree was seen lying (dead) Then I with a Blackfoot old man caught hold of the body. I tore one side of his scalp and stabbed him in the back many times, while I was stabbing him with a knife the Cree were shooting at me but they did not hit me. On this account I am called a chief.

When I was over there, there were camps in two places. Three of us were going along in advance. I saw them coming toward us. We came back just as they were finishing putting up the lodges. I called to them: "They are coming toward us." Notwithstanding this we hurried with the setting up of a tipi and charged them. A Cree man threw his wife on a horse, but while his horse was running young men came up to her and killed her. My brothers and I killed her husband. I caught the man's scalp just as he fell and tore off one side of it. I stabbed him in the back with a knife only twice. This we did at that time.

I went to war over there. There were only ten of us and I went ahead at night. A Cree had captured my brother's horse and overtook us while riding it. He perhaps thought we were Cree. We hid in front of him. He tied his horse and advanced with his gun. I had a quiver over my shoulder. As he walked toward us we charged him. He ran back where his horse was tied. I was running in advance of the others. Not being able to mount without turning his back to me, he let the horse go and turned around to shoot at me, although I was then running close toward him. I was about to grab hold of him when he turned and ran. He did not shoot me although I was still

pursuing him. Meantime one of the others, a Blackfoot, mounted the captured horse he had abandoned and chased him with it. The Blackfoot's gun did not go off and the Cree ran again. The Blackfoot rode at him again, but again the gun failed to go off. The Cree ran again. When the Blackfoot caught up with him he tried again to shoot him but the gun did not go off. He charged the Cree who dodged behind the horse so he could not be shot. Then the Cree ran out under the horse's neck. The Blackfoot shot the Cree and hit him in the hip. When the Blackfoot ran up to him with his knife, the Cree also drew a knife, and the Blackfoot ran from him. The Cree ran on and the Blackfoot picked up a stone and chased him with it. Just as he threw the stone the Cree turned again. The stone missed him and he ran on. The Blackfoot sat down and I chased the Cree alone. When I overtook him I shot him through the back with an arrow. I shot all the nine arrows that were in my quiver. They were all gone and the Cree was not dead. He was holy (charmed). I caught hold of his gun which he held in his hand as he sat there and threw him on his back with it. Then he lay on the ground.

THE SUN DANCE OF THE PLAINS-CREE

BY ALANSON SKINNER

ILLUSTRATIONS

TEXT FIGURES

	PAGE.
1. Sun Dance Structure. Round Lake.	288
2. The "Thunderers Rest" surmounting the Central Pole of the Cree Sun Dance Lodge	289
3. Detail of Construction of Cree Sun Dance Lodge, showing Bark Lashings. Round Lake Reserve	289
4. Plan of Cree Sun Dance Lodge	290

THE SUN DANCE OF THE PLAINS-CREE

The so-called "sun dance" is termed *Nipagwêtcimun*, or "Abstaining From Water Dance" by the Plains-Cree since the host and the participators fasted and denied themselves drink throughout the performance. The title "sun dance" is a misnomer as applied to the Cree ceremony, for the function was devoted particularly to the thunder, or to one of the other important gods, especially Gitce Manitu. Dr. Goddard informs me that this is practically identical with the data which he secured among Cree bands farther to the west (p. 306).

The ceremony, before it was prohibited by the Canadian Government, was regarded as a locally annual one, and, according to my informants at the Round Lake Reserve, it could only be given by a man who had dreamed of the thunder and was a supplication for rain for the public benefit and for long life for the maker.¹

Miss Amelia Paget² states:—

[that the ceremony] was primarily a thank-offering to the Great Spirit, Kichie Manitou, for the re-awakening of all nature after the silence of winter. It was a time for the making of braves, or, rather, an opportunity for the test of courage and endurance; it was a time for mourning their dead, and a time of petitions through their Pow-wah-kuns (dream guardians) for future blessings and love.

Most of these concepts were apparently present in the minds of the Cree whom the writer visited, but Mr. Robert Jefferson of the Canadian Indian service, referring to the Cree of Red Pheasant Reserve, Saskatchewan, gives conflicting testimony (p. 306)

The dance is projected during the fall or winter previous, and is the result of a promise, made in sickness or trouble, or may be an endeavor to secure some favor from the Powers Unknown. The same idea actuates the dancers.

This more closely resembles the Blackfoot concept, and, as has been stated, is not substantiated by the data of Miss Paget, Dr. Goddard, or the writer, except with regard to the individual dancers, who often vowed that they would take part and undergo the torture of fasting or mutilation.

When an Indian decides to give a *Nipagwêtcimun* he prays to the Great Spirit and offers him the pipe, asking his blessing on the project. Next the Indian prays to his dream guardian and offers the pipe to it. He tells his intentions and begs favor, adding a prayer for long life. As a

¹A brief account of the Cree sun dance is given in F. E. Peeso, "The Cree Indians" (*Museum Journal, University of Pennsylvania*, September, 1912, 50-57) presumably referring to the Montana Cree. The same group have held the dance at Pryor, on the Crow Reservation, and at Havre, Montana (Humphreys, J. Lee, *Twenty Years Among Our Hostile Indians*, [New York, 1902], 333).

²*People of the Plains*, (Toronto, 1909), 29.

matter of fact, it is generally known some time ahead that so-and-so intends to give a sun dance, and thus there is no chance of conflict in case some other person should be inspired to do the same thing.

Mr. Jefferson remarks:—

Certain persons only undertake to “make” a dance, those whose dreams or spiritual acquirements warrant them in assuming the great responsibility it entails. And they must be males. Until quite proficient the “maker” associates himself with one more expert, and the two are called “makers.” Or a single person may do it.

The ceremony takes place early in June; there are a number of places that are famous grounds. These are situated on high gravelly ridges, well drained, and suitable for camping. Such places are used

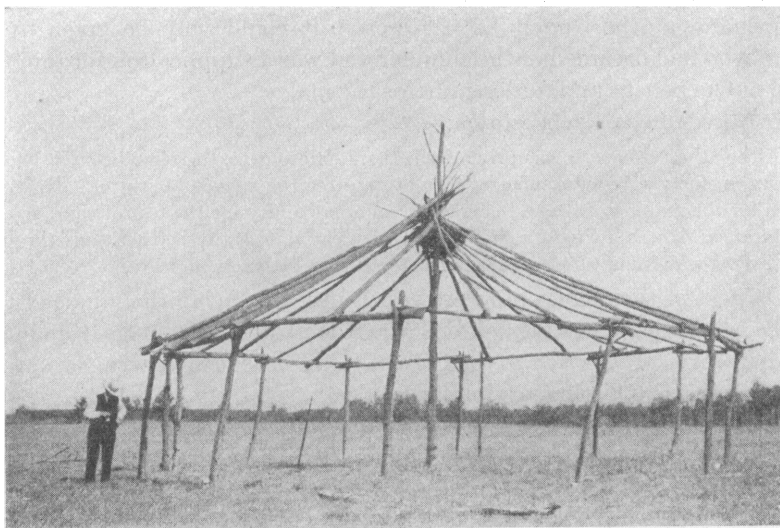


Fig. 1. Sun Dance Structure. Round Lake.

season after season, or were, until the Canadian Government began to prohibit this and other Indian ceremonies. When the appointed time drew near messengers were sent bearing pipes and tobacco to the host's tribesmen, telling them the time appointed and the place fixed upon. The invited guests would then migrate to the spot and erect their lodges in a great circle in the center of which the dance was to be held.

When the guests had arrived, and the appointed day was at hand, it was announced through the camp by a crier that the time had come to cut the central pole. Only the *okitcatau* were eligible for the function of finding it. They set forth to seek it as though they were stalking the

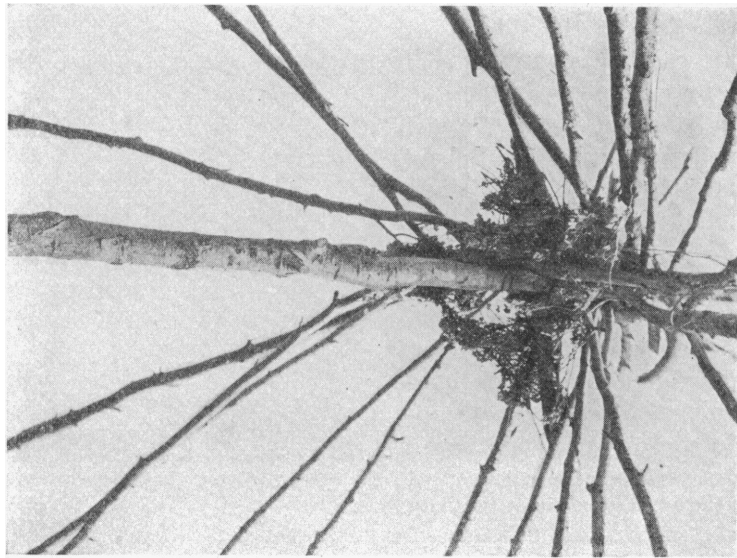


Fig. 2. The "Thunderers' Rest" surmounting the Central Pole of the Cree Sun Dance Lodge.

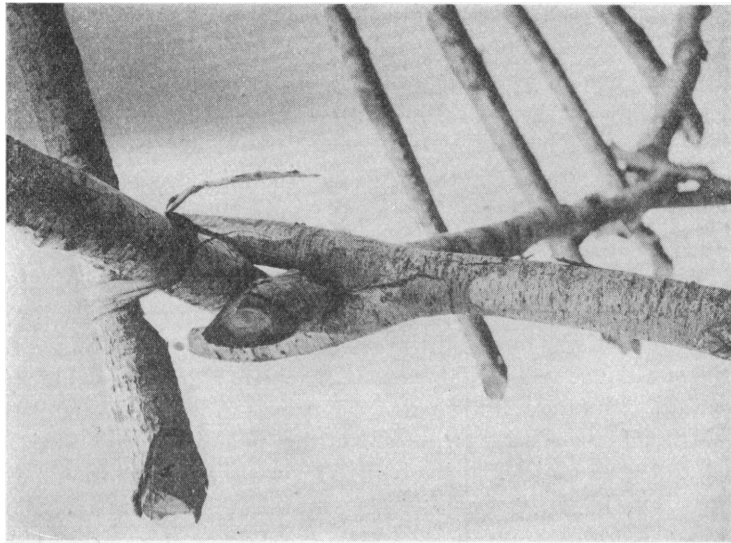


Fig. 3. Detail of Construction of Cree Sun Dance Lodge, showing Bark Lashings, Round Lake Reserve.

enemy and when they had selected a suitable pole they reported back to the camp. The others then went forth, carrying four guns and four axes in the party. When they arrived at the selected tree, the party halted, and a fire was made by the elders. A sweetgrass smudge was prepared for incense, the pipe was lighted and offered to the Great Spirit, and his blessing on the procedure was asked. Then the pipe was offered to the tree itself with these words:— "We want you to side with us to beg for favor from the Great Spirit."

The pole was then cut and when it tottered preparatory to falling, four volleys were fired. The branches were then trimmed off and left behind and the pole was lifted off the ground and carried in.¹ When the site for the sun dance lodge (Fig. 1) was reached, a hole was dug and the pole set up with prayer and singing. This was to be the center of the lodge. Mr. Jefferson says that when the pole is placed upright, "the master of ceremonies may be hauled up with it, seated in a 'nest' at the top," but the writer failed to get any information on this point.

Crotched poles were set up in a large circle; on these other poles were horizontally placed, these in turn upheld the roof beams which met at the center pole (see Fig. 2). All lashings were accomplished with bark (see Fig. 3). At the top of the pole was a bunch of twigs made to represent the thunderers' nest. Two doors were left at the sides. At the north end an altar was constructed by cutting away the sod, making a bare spot about two feet square, and two inches deep. Behind this was placed a buffalo skull, painted, and with the eyes and nostrils stuffed with dry grass. The host sat behind this, on either side of him were rows of booths made of boughs. These were about four feet high and are divided into little individual compartments for worshippers (see Fig. 4). Miss Paget says:²

The roof was also made of poles covered over with the green branches of the trees.

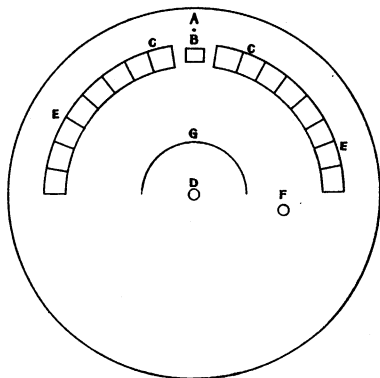


Fig. 4. Plan of Cree Sun Dance Lodge, a, host; b, altar; c-c, booths; d, center pole; e-e, galleries; f, drum; g, torture dancers.

¹Miss Paget (32) says that the tree was dragged into camp by ropes and there shorn of its branches.

²Miss Paget, 33.

In the inside fully half, or even three-quarters, of the north side of the lodge was divided off into numerous small compartments by short posts set in the ground, with a lattice work of thongs around each. All the spaces would be filled by a basket-work of green boughs, but in each cell or compartment was a small opening, just large enough to permit a person to crawl in. These openings were at the back of the cells facing the large space left in the lodge. . . . Around the opening at the top of each ran a piece of rawhide thong to give strength to the structure, but this was usually hidden by the green leaves and branches forming the basket-work.

Behind the booths was an open space or gallery for spectators. The outside of the lodge was hung with tenting to shut it off from the world. In the northeast of the lodge was a drum, surrounded by a group of singers who kept up a general chorus. The booth dancers performed two days and two nights, fasting all the time and dancing at intervals. They looked constantly skywards, and blew on little bone whistles as they "danced" that is, bent their knees without lifting their feet.

When the ceremony was about to commence the dancers took their places and the host made a sweetgrass smudge on the altar, and from that time on no one was permitted to pass this sacred spot. The host then prayed to the Great Spirit, again beseeching long life, rain, and his blessing on the ceremony. Last of all he addressed a prayer to the pole. He turned his pipstem to all four points of the compass, up and down, and burned sweetgrass in all four corners of the altar that all the gods might be appeased, and concluded by burying a small piece of tobacco in each corner of the altar for the same purpose. Offerings of calicoes and other gifts were then hung up, "thrown away," as a sacrifice to the powers, and the dance proper commenced. The drumming and singing started and the fasters in the booths suddenly stood erect and began to blow their whistles. At intervals there was a lull, but they soon started again. These dancers usually had as a motive the desire to gain the mediation of the gods for a sick relative or friend. Others danced in fulfillment of a vow made when some person was sick on a previous occasion.

The motives of those who tortured themselves were different. In the most ancient times, according to Four-clouds (Kanewûsk'wûham), who tried to give the sun dance in 1911, no torturing was undergone; later, it was an invariable feature. Although some underwent the pain to cure sick friends or in fulfillment of a vow, others took part merely to show their bravery. The Rev. Dr. Hugh Mackay of the Round Lake Mission says that one of his pupils, a boy of sixteen, danced for the following reason. His brother had two wives, one of whom was the daughter of a chief. The wives quarreled and the chief's daughter was killed. Her father vowed that he would slay her husband. When a

little later, the chief gave a sun dance, it was to his honor to get as many dancers as possible to undergo the torture, and the youth, brother of his son-in-law, offered to submit if the chief would spare his brother's life. His offer was accepted.

Those who were to submit to the torture came forward during the dance and presented themselves to the host, who called on certain medicinemen who were present. These men pinched up the flesh in two places on the breast, slit it with a knife, ran in wooden skewers, and made them fast to thongs attached to the central pole. The dancers flung themselves back, tugged, whistled, and gazed skyward. They stayed for "one pipe" in this position according to Four-clouds. The Rev. Hugh Mackay made the period between five and ten minutes. Some fainted, and were cut down, disgraced. No effort was made to tear loose, but if this occurred, as sometimes accidentally happened, the person was instantly freed. During the torture the sufferers wept and prayed continually.

Outside the lodge men made the entire circuit of the camp trailing several buffalo skulls attached by thongs and skewers to their backs or arms, or with several guns carried in the same manner. Some, apparently those who had dreamed of horses, would make their steeds fast also, and would try to lead the horses, fastened by thongs made fast to skewers in their backs, into the lodge and around it. As the horses balked, reared, and pranced, when frightened by the drums and the people, the Indians thought this an exceedingly painful test.

Miss Paget¹ says that no one ever boasted of his deeds of torture in the sun dance though others often talked of them. She adds:—

The women also underwent certain forms of torture, and these, too, required a great deal of courage. These self sacrifices on the part of the women were, properly speaking, memorial offerings for the departed ones. The woman who wished to undergo this suffering had her arms from the elbow down, slashed with cuts from a sharp knife; this was also done by the medicine men. In the case of the women, the torture was inflicted after they had taken part in the dance. Some women, and men also would have their hair cut short, as a memorial for their dead. As every Indian was proud of his hair, these offerings, though painless, required great self-sacrifice.

During the time the sun dance was in progress, any Indian taking part gave to the spirits of his departed friends, according to his means, offerings which were hung upon the trees or poles for three or more days, after which lapse of time, they were taken away by friends of the donors, if they wished to appropriate them. It was a real gift, as they never resumed them. In this interval of two or three days, it was held that the spirits had used them fully, and after that time they might fairly be taken and utilized by the living.

¹Miss Paget, 38.

She adds that these offerings at this time were voluntary on the part of the donors and not demanded by custom. The Cree at Round Lake assured the writer that sacrificed objects should never be touched by anyone. If they were disturbed, disaster would overtake the culprit. The sun dance seems to have lasted four days and nights, in former days, but now two days and two nights is the usual limit. Jefferson says the time was optional with the maker and gives the time as one or two nights.¹

¹The following note appears in the *Proceedings of the Canadian Institute* (Toronto, vol. XXIV, 1888), 40:—

Mr. T. B. Browning had seen one of these Sun dances by the Crees, a very large one. There were no less than ten or twelve chiefs and about 140 tepees. The ceremonies were substantially the same as those described by Mr. McLean [for the Blood]. He saw four undergoing the torture. They were smeared with a white chalk clay. When strung up they rested wholly on the heel, and skipping round described about the third of a circle, the chiefs cheering them on. He witnessed another ceremony at the same time, that of adoption. A medicine man brought forward a little girl, crossed his hands over her, took her from her mother and handed her over to the man who adopted her. His informant, a half breed, told him that the medicine man called upon the gods to witness the rite.

NOTES ON THE SUN DANCE OF THE CREE IN ALBERTA

By PLINY EARLE GODDARD

ILLUSTRATIONS

TEXT FIGURES

	PAGE.
1. Horsemen at Sun Dance, Plains-Cree	300
2. Horsemen setting out to bring the Material for the Sun Dance Lodge, Hobbema, Alberta	300
3. The Sun Dance Lodge, Hobbema, Alberta	301

THE SUN DANCE OF THE CREE OF ALBERTA

While engaged in collecting ethnological specimens among the Plains-Cree near Battleford, Saskatchewan, in June, 1911, information was received that a sun dance was soon to be held near Hobbema, Alberta. Since there was nothing to prevent, plans were made to witness the ceremony. A Cree-speaking driver was secured at Wetaskiwin and the place of the dance, four miles southeast of the Hobbema railroad station, was reached about 6:30 p.m. Monday, June 19th.

A considerable number of tipis and tents were already arranged in a large circle. At one time 120 tipis and tents were counted, but the number varied from time to time as parties arrived or departed. Each band was grouped by itself in a sector of the circle. The site to be occupied by the sun dance lodge was indicated by a small tree lying on the ground. The tipi of the givers of the dance, two men, was in the center of the circle. It consisted of two tipi covers united to form one large lodge.

When we arrived a "tea dance" was in progress on the south side of and beyond the camp circle. At about 10:00 p.m. certain old men gathered in the tipi of the dance givers where the drum was heard until after midnight. About 4:00 the next morning, Tuesday, a crier went around the circle and a gun was fired. At 6:00 the crier went around again, this time threatening to use his stick if the people did not get up. A quarter of an hour later a number of men gathered near the tipi of the givers of the dance and formed a semicircle. A few minutes after they were charged by about eight older men who rushed in from the bushes with poplar branches in their hands. Those who had taken up their position in the semicircle grabbed up branches lying ready in a pile and pretended to repel the attack. The contest lasted only a few minutes.

At a quarter past eight a mounted crier began making circuits around the camp on the inside of the circle. His white horse had a disk of feathers tied to his tail and was painted on his hips with a blue disk and on his shoulders with designs among which a cross was noted. A second man, to whose horse bells were attached, rode behind him. They continued in sunwise circuits around the camp until a large number of horsemen had joined them.

Five small poplar trees were stood up on a small knoll within the camp circle on the east side where a fire was kindled. The tambourines warmed at this fire were beaten and the horsemen rode in sunwise circles

around the knoll. A prayer was said and the old men, one or two at a time, danced between the trees. The chief of the Protestant band of the tribe, Samson, addressed those present urging them to build the sun dance lodge well and not to ride their horses recklessly.

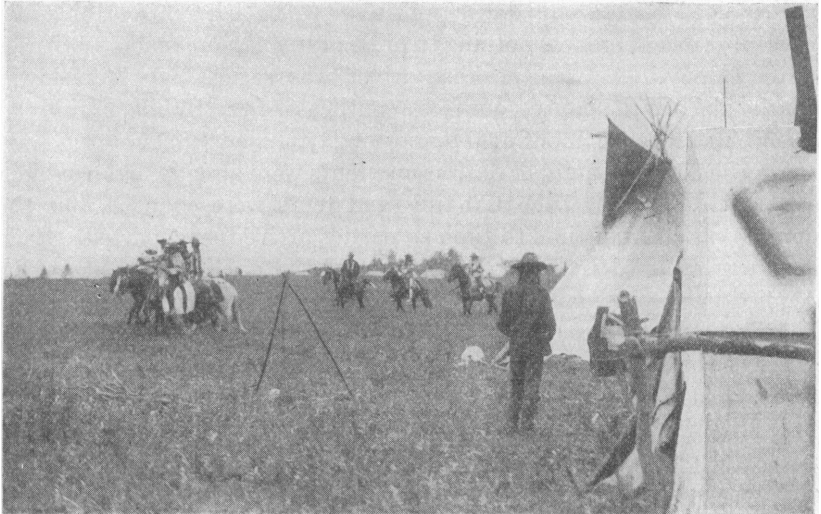


Fig. 1. Horsemen at Sun Dance, Plains-Cree.



Fig. 2. Horsemen setting out to bring the Material for the Sun Dance Lodge, Hobbema, Alberta.

The younger men then rode off in a body to the southeast to secure the tree which was to form the center post of the lodge.

At 9:30, a man, one of the two giving the sun dance, came from the east carrying four banners of white cloth, two in each hand, one above the other. The staffs of the lower two of them at least were used as canes. He wore only a breechcloth. Having encircled his tipi sunwise he paused at the rear and entered.

While the younger men were after the center post the older men were engaged in beating the tambourine, singing, praying, and exchanging presents of blankets.

At 10:00 an old man made a formal announcement and a few of the older men proceeded to mark out the circumference of the circle to be occupied by the sun dance lodge, using small sticks for the purpose. Gun shots were heard at about this time from the direction that the men had gone for the tree.

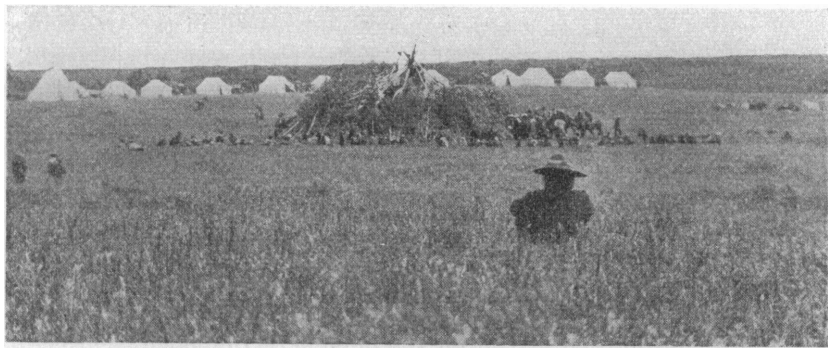


Fig. 3. Sun Dance Lodge, Hobbema, Alberta.

.At a quarter past ten an old man called for knives to be brought with which the hole was dug to receive the main post of the lodge. The man standing in the hole had his hips level with the ground when the hole was completed. At half past ten the old men were seated¹ singing, accompanied by tambourines. The large tree for the center post was brought in at 10:40 by eighty men. The tree was brought in top foremost. Two long branches had been left near its top. When it had been brought to its place it was left resting on braces so that the top of the tree was about nine feet above the ground. The horsemen, who had brought in the tree, immediately rode around the old men and sat on their horses while there was singing and praying. At 10:50 the company returned to the site chosen for the lodge.

At 11:10 an old man rode part way around the circuit telling the girls and married women to get ready to go for the building material. He told them not to be afraid to do so since their men were not permitted to be jealous on this occasion. The men rode around the camp circle,

¹Evidently on the knoll mentioned above but the notes do not state so definitely.

the girls falling in behind them on horseback. These young people began coming back with the smaller material to be used for the sun dance lodge at about 12:35. For the most part the girls were by themselves, but in a few instances a girl and boy were riding double on the same horse. Some of the trees were dragged in tied behind wagons. The posts used for the outside of the structure were brought in by older men.

The outer posts were in place at 12:55. On these posts poles were placed horizontally to form a plate. An opening was left toward the south¹ and another opposite, toward the north.

A nest was made of green branches and placed in the tree which was to form the center post while it still rested on its supports.

The herald rode around the circuit at 2:15. Two men put cloth on the nest and on the trunk of the tree below the nest as well as on the rafters for the upper third of their lengths. One of these men wore only a breechcloth while the other had on a blanket in addition. The center post was raised at 4:40 by means of two pairs of poles tied together near their tops, and six ropes attached to the post itself. The rafters were then pushed up from the plate to the nest, supported at the inner ends during the process by means of poles tied to form shears. Large quantities of brush were then leaned on the outside of the lodge inclosing it, except on the south. The rafters were not covered, leaving the roof open to the sky.² At one time during the dance, however, pieces of canvas were placed over the lower part of the roof.

About 9:00 that evening two men wearing only breechcloths came out of the dance giver's tipi carrying buffalo skulls which they held to their breasts. After standing for a moment they went slowly around the sun dance lodge crying as they walked. They were followed by two older men who also cried.³ According to an informant,⁴ a man who had fasted ten days came carrying banners during the evening. He was met at the entrance of the sun dance lodge and a series of little fires were built on which incense was put. The last of these was near the back of the lodge by the altar where the man warmed himself. The man "came to begin the dancing." The same informant said a man brought a bundle, from which two sticks projected, out of the dance giver's tipi

¹The openings were first assumed to be east and west and were so recorded. Afterwards it was noticed that the entrance of the lodge was south, admitting the noonday sun. It will be noted that the ceremony coincided in its time with the summer solstice.

²This was said to be a Blackfoot style of lodge, the first to be built at this place. The old type was covered with skin lodge covers which were left on the sun dance lodge as an offering.

³Events from six to nine were not observed, but were reported by a white man, a camping companion.

⁴Mr. Crandall, son-in-law of Ermineskin, the older of the two chiefs.

and placed it by the altar as soon as it was completed. Shortly after nine a drum summoned the dancers who took their places. The drumming and, presumably the dancing, continued all night with intervals of rest.

Wednesday morning about 8:30 one of the dance givers passed our camping place. He did not look up or around. He carried banners on both sides of himself.¹

When the lodge was visited the internal arrangements could be observed. At the back of the lodge was an altar. A buffalo skull rested on a cushion of red cloth. On either side a row of canes stood in the ground, their tops bent over like shepherd crooks and tied down. On both sides on the outer sides of the canes were two small frames. The skull was placed with its nose towards the center post.² The nose and eye sockets of the skull were said to be stuffed with sage. At one time six men were counted on the west side of the altar and three on the east. At least one of those on the west and the three on the east were naked and painted yellow. One of them had a fillet about his head resting low on his forehead. There was white paint on his face through which his brown skin was showing.

On the center post, on the side facing the entrance was painted a thunderbird in blue. Above the thunderbird was a crescent. Banners were displayed by the center post upon which were also painted thunderbirds and the figure of a man. A fire was being maintained south of the center post and two small ones by the base of the post on either side. On these small fires incense was sprinkled occasionally. The chorus was seated on the west side of the center post forming an oval and facing each other. They were all elderly men. They beat the drum, shook rattles, and sang. It was said that in former times these drummers ate buffalo tongues when they were hungry.

On either side of the altar, running well toward the entrance, were barriers built of sticks and brush. The men dancers occupied the west side and the part of the east side next to the altar. On the east side near the entrance were seven women, one of whom stood some distance from the others and nearer the entrance. Two of the men dancers on the east side wore masks. One of these appeared to be of cloth or buckskin and was painted gray. On the last day of the dance a woman appeared twice, wearing a mask which resembled a cat's head. This barrier came

¹We were told he was simply returning from the bushes.

²It was said that when the skull was being placed one man held it and another sighted by the main post in order to line it up precisely.

about to the waist of the dancers when they were standing. When the singing began all of the dancers arose and moved their bodies up and down, looking up and blowing on the whistles. As soon as the songs ended they sat down, disappearing from view. The singing and dancing re-occurred at frequent intervals during the day and night. These dancers were said to endure the ordeal without food and with water only in case rain fell during the ceremony. Women, probably relatives, were seen passing food through the walls of the lodge to certain of the dancers. One of the dancing women appeared to be heavy with child. An old man told the interpreter that the dancers see their spirits in the center post and that the post itself moves up and down while the spirits dance around it.

Once during the day several men came in together carrying in their arms wood for the fire. The leader had a poplar branch in his hand. They danced just as they entered and again by the fire on the south. One by one they threw the entire armfuls of wood on the fire. An attendant removed most of the wood. Later one man came in by himself, counted his coups, and threw a stick on the fire for each coup. There was general laughter at one of these recitals. Most of this wood was afterward removed.

During Wednesday night it rained very hard and little drumming was heard. Sufficient rain was caught with a canvas stretched over the dancers so that they were able to drink.

Thursday morning about 9:15 Samson and a band of old men came from the southeast. They stopped about one hundred yards from the sun dance lodge and danced, shouting occasionally. They then entered the lodge going to the fire behind the post. Several of the old men talked, apparently concerning their exploits. After all had spoken they circled the post, dancing. One elderly man faced the entrance and talked about selling the reservation. Samson, the chief, made a speech and then the dancers came out from behind their barrier and danced, standing in a circle, but not moving around. The women came in through the entrance and stood on the west side. About 10:20 the dancers returned to their regular places and the ordinary dancing was resumed. Later, Ermineskin's band came in and related their exploits. The chief spoke first, telling how he had captured a gun. During the fight he was in a rifle pit and saw a gun sticking out of another pit occupied by a Blackfoot. He grabbed the gun and was pulled into the pit. He cut the Blackfoot with his knife and escaped, taking the gun with him.

One of the men made a joke about himself for the amusement of those present. Ermineskin's band then went outside to the west and gave away property. Currency was attached to sticks. These bills were pulled off one at a time and presented to different individuals. Ermineskin and his band then danced west of the lodge and a second time south of it. The movement was a violent jumping about.

A boy rode a horse into the lodge where it was given away. The man giving it stood with his family before the tree to the south. He prayed a long time and very rapidly. Before the prayer coals were placed at the base of the center pole and incense was put on them.

The surrounding tribes, Cree, Stoney (Assiniboin), Sarsi, and Black-foot were represented by invited guests. The chiefs or leaders of these bands were given presents which they distributed to their followers. These gifts consisted largely of clothing. It was remarked that the women hosts had divested themselves of their last petticoats in order to make presents to their guests. Food was served each day about noon.

The dancing ceased and the celebration terminated about 4:00 p. m. It had been the former practice merely to leave the lodge with its offerings intact. It was said, however, that in other years some of the offerings had been taken by white people.¹ It was therefore the intention to take down the offerings and carry them to the timber where they would be again hung up.

Very little was learned about the sun dance except what could be directly seen or inferred. The man employed as a driver and interpreter was able to speak Cree but he was living in town, as a white man, and knew little about the ceremony. He seemed to have few acquaintances among those present. On arriving, advances were made to the elderly chief who was then assumed to be the only one or at least the most important chief. Later it was learned that the ceremony was being given by the Protestant band of which the younger man, Samson, was chief. By that time he was already alienated by the unintended slight and could not be won over to a thoroughly friendly attitude.

From what was observed and the few comments obtained, it seems that the sun dance, while outwardly not differing markedly from that of the tribes further south, in its underlying conceptions is quite different. The dance is given by one or two men upon whom it is made incumbent by a dream. These men undergo a prolonged fast. There

¹The sisters from the school had taken the new cloth and made it into clothing for their charges, was the report.

was no evidence of a woman connected with the ceremony who had taken a vow to give it. The main feature seemed to be the prolonged dancing of the men and women who tax their endurance to the utmost. As a result, they came to see visions in which spirits, their own or ones bearing certain relations to them, are *en rapport* with the center post which itself comes to life. The ceremony itself is locally known not as the sun dance but as a thirst dance. It seems to be held in part for the purpose of inducing rain. Nothing transpired to indicate any relation to the sun but all the information indicated that thunder was the deity concerned to whom the offerings are also devoted.

Mr. Robert Jefferson has kindly contributed the following account of the sun dance of the Plains-Cree as observed on Red Pheasant Reserve, Saskatchewan:—

The dance to which white men have given this name is peculiar to the Plains Indians, though it is now being adopted, with alterations, by the inhabitants of the wooded country to the north. It is known among the Cree by a name which means "denying-one's-self-water," in the same way as "fasting" is denying one's self food. Also, though the pantheon of the Indian is indiscriminately inclusive, the sun seems to have been neglected. So, how the sun dance acquired the name is a mystery. The booth of the sun dance is the temple of the thunder; the dance itself is a locally annual ceremony of supplication and thanksgiving.

Certain persons only, undertake to "make" a dance, those whose dreams or spiritual acquirements warrant them in assuming the great responsibility it entails. And they must be males. Until quite proficient, the "maker" associates with himself one or more experts and the two are named as "makers," or a single person may do it. But each has some side lines in which he slightly differs in ceremonial from the others.

The dance is projected during the fall or winter previous and is the result of a promise, made in sickness or trouble, or may be an endeavor to secure some favor from the Powers Unknown. The same idea actuates the dancers. They vow to dance for whichever time they choose, one night or two nights,—fasting or modified fasting, dependent, of course, on some one making a dance,—or, at the next dance.

Before spring, it is heard that this or that man is going to "make" a dance, at such and such a place, or, the maker may send a message round inviting people. Everyone learns of it anyhow. If he thinks it proper, he wraps small pieces of tobacco up in parchment, and dispatches young men to distribute them. These will travel round, going to the head men. They will present their little package and say, "Smoke this. So-and-so says thus to thee, 'I intend to make a sun dance. Come, and help me and all your people.'" If the receiver of the message assents, he, and the crowd of men assembled solemnly and in silence smoke the pipe in which the tobacco has been put, and an affirmative answer is given to the request. The time is given in the moon's phases. All this is done in quite a ceremonious and dignified style. When the official part is completed, the assemblage allows itself to discuss matters in a gossip way with the messenger until he leaves.

Apart from its religious significance, the sun dance marks the yearly gathering of people whom the exigencies of life compel to spend the fall and winter in isolation, and it is looked forward to as such. The young make, and the old renew acquaintances, and it is a general holiday.

In the early part of June—in the North—when the leaves are full-sized, the “maker” pitches his tent at the appointed place. As the people arrive they arrange their tipis by tribes and families in a circle calculated to hold all expected to attend. When the circle is complete, an old man, chosen for his loud voice and strong lungs, marches slowly round, crying out that operations are to be commenced and people are to get ready at once. This means that every young man that owns or can borrow a horse, arrays himself and his steed in all the finery he can muster. If he can persuade a girl to sit behind him, all the more glory. And, oh! if he has a prancing horse.

First, the convener, as master of ceremonies, followed by all the men, young and old, marches to a tune round the circle, the music composed by the maker, or his familiar, or perhaps one of the tunes used on such occasions. Then they set off to the bush, old and young, the first with axes, the others, mounted and provided with long lariats. The horsemen and women gallop off, making their ponies rear and cut up, to show off, the dogs bark, girls squeal in coquettish fear, guns are fired, and everybody has a great time. The older men chop down the necessary trees, the young attach lines and haul them. The pole for the middle is perhaps twenty feet long and six or eight inches through, with two or three stumps of branches left at the top. A lot of shooting is done at and over this stick. When the hauling is done, a hole is dug and the tree for the middle is pulled into perpendicular by lines. The master of ceremonies may be hauled up with it, seated in a “nest” made at the top. Uprights, with crocheted top are set in the ground say ten feet apart, in a circle with a radius of about twenty feet from the tree. Rails are placed round in the crotches and rafters join the sides to the “nest” in the tree. Several tipis which partly cover the enclosure are borrowed. The door is on the south. A few feet north of the tree a hole eighteen inches square is dug, and an old buffalo head placed beside it. A barricade of leafy branches goes round the north side of the booth where the dancers stay, and is continued breast high in front of them and at the ends of the line, so that they are fenced in, back, front, and sides, in a semicircular lane, about six feet wide. With the green of the boughs enlivened by varicolored prints, the gifts of votaries, the grotesque decoration of the dancers, and the generally barbaric surroundings, the scene is one to be long remembered. On the pole in the middle are hung articles dedicated to the “Great Bird,” guns, rifles, pieces of cloth or print—anything the giver likes. When the dance is over these things will be taken and hung in some out-of-the-way spot in the bush, to be safe from the mocker or marauder.

The actual dance begins in the evening. A small fire is lit on the far side of the pole—apparently for the sake of smokers. To the right of this, round the big drum, sits the choir—men with small drumsticks in their hands. They are the best singers and gangs relieve one another at intervals. Men have the left side and women the right and as many as will join in the singing. Some of the men and numbers of the women have very good voices. Each dancer has a small whistle made from the leg-bone of a goose, which sounds a shrill “toot-toot” in time with the drum. They dance or rest as they like. All are arrayed as fancy and means dictate; paint of all colors disguises their countenances, and the general effect is frequently diabolical. Dancing is not continuous. Each night all stop for a few hours’ sleep, and there are

frequent intervals during the day. A slight bending of the knees, to allow the body to move up and down, constitutes the dance. A song will be raised and the drum started. The dancers—a few, many, or all—bob up from behind their leafy screen, whistle in mouth, “toot-toot toot-toot”; the singing stops, the dance ends, and down they drop into their places.

There are many diversions. Once the master of ceremonies had the top joint and a half of his left little finger chopped off in fulfillment of a vow. A block of wood was brought in and placed beside the fire. The victim made a little speech, telling how he had promised to do this when his child was sick. The child has died, but he was going to keep his word. Some would not have done so, but he was one who did what he said. He sat down on his crossed legs beside the block, and began to sing. He laid his fingers on the block, and an old fellow, with a business-like air, held the hand, while with one sweep of a long heavy cleaver-like knife, he chopped off a piece of the finger. The song stopped when amputation was complete. The finger was terribly butchered; the bone shattered into fragments so that it took a long time to heal. All interest in the event vanished as soon as the deed was done. Or the vow may be of other mutilation. A couple of inches of loose skin on each side, just above the breast are caught between the finger and thumb and held tightly while the sharp blade of a jackknife is pushed through, making a slit just big enough to insert a small wooden skewer about four inches long, on each breast. These allow room for fastening a line, the free end of which is attached to the top of the middle pole from the outside. The victim then dances, or staggers round and round outside the booth, straining on the line. He must break loose, and he does it by throwing his weight on the line till the skin gives way. But this does not always happen quickly, and it may need the added weight and nerve of friends to end the man's torture.

Similarly, skewers by which to drag one or two old buffalo heads are run through the skin of the shoulder blades. A line is tied to the heads, which trail on the ground behind, and much careful choosing of the way is needed to bring the burden into the tent with a minimum of jerking. Arrived at the pole the line may be untied and the skewers withdrawn. If the ordeal is prolonged, these skewers swell with the moisture, and are often pulled out only by catching hold with the teeth and giving a sharp jerk.

Again articles may be suspended from the skewers. In one instance, two men, carrying ten guns, went off behind a knoll some distance away. The total weight must have been sixty or seventy pounds; this was borne into the booth, a gun hanging by a thong on each of ten different skewers run through the back, while the bearer, the whole distance sang as heartily as the pain would allow. In the tent, the master of ceremonies unhitched the strings from the skewers, every one of which he pulled out with his teeth. He piled the guns near the pole, and their owners came up singly and claimed them.

A horse may be tied to a skewer and led into the tent, perhaps he is led round the circle. This is a trying ordeal as everything tends to make the animal shy and he often breaks loose. The penitent will be fastened to the bridled horse in the open, anywhere, and he will make the round of the circle of tipis, singing. The round completed, he will enter the tent and go up to the pole, on which he will lean, with bowed head, and folded arms, face downward.

Ludicrous incidents are frequent. Once, a brave undertook to lead a dog into the booth by a skewer fastened in the skin between the shoulders. The dog was a great big brute, for an Indian dog, a monster. The man made the round of the circle,

led the dog up to the center pole, and bowed his head there in lamentation. His wails grew louder and louder. During this time the dog was uneasy, being evidently suspicious of his surroundings. Whenever the man's devotion vented itself in sudden and loud bursts of wailing, the dog tugged at the line which confined him; and, as the animal was about as heavy as the man, the latter found it hard to preserve that equilibrium of mind and body which the solemnity of the occasion demanded. But, the trouble was bearable, until in the course of his penance it became necessary for the Indian to fire his gun in the air. At the explosion, the dog gave a fearful jump, and, howling, jerked the man over backward, dragged him out of the booth and through the crowd, till he finally broke loose, and left the astounded worshipper to recover himself amid the roars of the hastily assembled Indians.

The large audiences, too, offer an opportunity for the braves to recount their deeds of daring in some such manner as the following. A number of select warriors, practically naked, with bodies smeared all over with white mud picked out in red with the signs of their brave deeds, file into the arena, singing and dancing. They "dance to somebody for somebody," and their aim is to enhearten the dancers. After a while they stop dancing and one or the other tells the story of some successful raid. His oration will run as follows:—

"We were camped at such and such a place. From there a war party went out. I was one. We numbered so many. So many nights we walked, hiding in the daytime. Suddenly we felt the enemy. We sent out scouts. They found a large camp. Three days we stayed there; we saw them every day, but they never felt us. We brought away twenty horses. I cut loose one tied to the door of a lodge. Three days we fled. They never overtook us.

A tap or two on the drum at each sentence and a loud and long rattle at the end, show the appreciation of the audience. Or the speech may run thus:—

"We started out from the Elbow on a hunting tour. We came across people on the edge of the Eagle Hills. We were a large camp. We struck out on the prairie. On the tenth night the Blackfoot attacked us. We beat them off. For three days we fought as we traveled. I was riding a buffalo runner, a bay with three white feet. I exchanged shots with a Blackfoot. I rode at him. He ran away. I caught him, and pulled him off his horse. I stabbed him with a knife."

These accounts are usually greeted with deafening applause of drum beats.

The story is perhaps acted in dumb-show, if Indians of another tribe, Stoney, for example, are in camp. It is astonishing how the untutored actor can convey the required impression to the spectator. But, at least some slight knowledge of the sign language of the Plains Indians is necessary to a complete understanding of the performance.

It has often been remarked by old Indians that the tales told by braves during the sun dance, are, to say the least, outrageous exaggerations. Each event narrated has been witnessed by someone in the audience, so the truth of each is well known. So, it may safely be taken that these stories have merely a foundation of truth; interwoven with this, are all the embellishments that the imagination and oratorical powers of the narrator allow.

On the second day most of the offerings are made. Wearing apparel, ornaments, household utensils, guns, horses, and equipments, any of the things that enter into Indian life, either as necessities or superfluities are offered as sacrifice. The small things are piled in the open space in the tent, lifted up one by one by the master of

ceremonies for some one to come forward and take. Horses are led into the tent. A few words will accompany most gifts, a reminder to listeners of the giver's virtue. The takers are mostly old people—the cheekiest. The underlying idea of the offering is, that it may buy something the giver desires—health, long life, success of some kind, which will be contributed by the recipient. So the oldest and poorest, who have very little to lose, elect to take chances. They will give reasons why they are the proper persons, with better right than any other, to receive the gift. But a listener will conclude that impudence is their principal attribute. A crowd of spectators sits three or four deep round the edge of the booth in the space not taken up by the dancers; men on the left, and women on the right; the men in breechleout, leggings, and moccasins, with a blanket thrown over their shoulders. The number of horses a man has stolen will be told by the horse hoofs marked on his blanket; hands indicate the times he has grappled with the enemy, while the feather in his head will be tipped with a little red branch for each foe killed. The women wear all the finery they can muster.

By this time, if the weather is hot, the zeal of the dancers has visibly waned. When a tune ends, they all drop out of sight as abruptly as possible, to while away time in smoking and gossip or in the pleasures of the toilet. Little mirrors and paint are part of their equipment. They may leave the booth when compelled by any necessity.

The most stirring tunes will now be started and the drum pounded with all the vigor that a full stomach can put into a stroke, to enhearten an empty one. The helpers will come and dance frequently. The votaries will be reminded by the master of ceremonies that their time is now short, at sundown they will be free; and that the thunder will be invoked to send a shower to refresh them. They may drink any rain water they can catch. He will then sing his own particular song, composed by himself, and always distinguished to a greater degree by vigor than by harmony. There is invariably rain during a sun dance, sometimes a shower, perhaps only a sprinkle, but always enough to convince the Indians that their supplications are heard. Nevertheless, some of the dancers collapse and have to be taken home for revival.

The joker now has his part to play in the ceremony. As though to recount some brave deed, an old warrior will leave the circle of spectators and advance into the arena. His harangue will run thus: "On a summer hunt once, camp was made in Round Valley"—drum beats here—"A party went off for horses; I was one."—beat—"A long way off we came up to the Blood."—rat-tat-tat—"They felt us."—rat-tat—"But we gathered some horses together and fled before them."—rat-tat—"Three days we fled. The land was dry. We were thirsty."—rat-tat-tat—"All the springs and lakes to which we came were dried up."—rat-tat—"We were very thirsty."—beat—"As thirsty as you are now."—burst of drum beats—"We thought to perish. Any kind of water, we wanted."—rat-tat—"Only a little."—rat-tat—"The third evening we came to a spring at Tramping Lake."—roll of drum beats—"And we all had a good drink. Just as you will this evening. Persevere."—Fusillade of drum beats, and murmurs of applause.

The dance ends at sundown, when the exhausted devotees repair to their tents for much-needed refreshment, with that peace of mind which only a sense of duty fulfilled and obligation paid can bestow.

THE SUN DANCE OF THE PLAINS-OJIBWAY

By ALANSON SKINNER

THE SUN DANCE OF THE PLAINS-OJIBWAY

Like the sun dance of the Cree, from which the Bûngi presumably derived their ceremony, the Bûngi *Nipagwêtcimun* or "Dance of Abstaining from Water" is a locally annual performance.

It was very hard to get any of the Bûngi to admit that the sun dance was practised by them in recent times, inasmuch as it has been sternly repressed by the Indian agents because of the torture features. However, questioning soon elicited the fact that it is still held secretly at night. The information here given was obtained from Ogimauwinini; his son, Charlie Assiniboin, a man of about forty, Tobacco, Joe Pasoin, and my interpreter, Dauphin Myron, all of whom had seen this ceremony frequently and had probably taken part in it on one or more occasions, though fear of the punishment by the government made them deny it.

The number of those who have the right to give the sun dance is very limited, only those who have dreamed of the thunder may do so, for the first man who ever gave one had it revealed to him by the thunder, who commanded him to cause the ceremony to be performed. It is primarily a rite devoted to the worship of the thunder, secondarily, to the sun and all the gods. As a ceremonial, it is second in importance only to the midéwiwin.

When a thunder dreamer decides or is told by the thunderers to make a sun dance, the announcement is made in midwinter, and the time set at the middle of the following June. Everyone is invited to come, but it is stipulated that the warriors must be willing to fast and do without water during the entire ceremony. When the appointed day arrives all the guests are gathered and camped together.

The young men adorned themselves with paint and feathers and their best clothes. They caparison their ponies with beads and bells, and the girls and old folks assume their dress clothes. The youths then ride out and fell a large tree, about twenty feet high, and trim it except for the topmost branches. They then bring it into camp and erect it, placing a bundle of leaves, representing the nest of the thunderers, in the top. Other young men and maidens ride out and secure saplings which they tie with lines and drag in with their horses, and the lodge is erected. It is finished at noon. It is a large, round, open bough structure. To conclude the first day, a dog feast is given, and prayers made by the dreamer and all his guests. These supplications are to all the gods, especially the thunder, asking them to protect and aid the Indians.

The dreamer goes out and announces that on the morrow, very early, the dance will commence, and asks all those who desire to attend to come, stipulating that they must neither eat nor drink.

The next day the participants come, even children being sent by their parents, and the dance begins, lasting two days and two nights. Those who take an active part and fast, are ten or sometimes more in number, they are men, and generally *okitcita*, who are usually expected to take part, though it is not demanded of them. These men are attached to the central pole by thongs attached to skewers put through the muscles of their breasts. They have whistles made from the hollow wing bones of the goose or swan in their mouths. They strain back, whistle as they dance, and fix their gaze on the thunderers' nest at the top of the central pole. It is said that they only dance for a minute or two in this fashion, and are then released and do not have to tear loose, though they try. This may be a modern development, if true, due to governmental objection, or it may be only an attenuated phase of the typical Plains custom that was never any stronger among the Bûngi. Besides the ten sufferers there are some who, in obedience to a command received in a dream, and, as I understand it, those who have dreamed of the buffalo, have buffalo skulls fastened to their shoulders by thongs and skewers, others have stones of considerable size and weight attached in like manner to their arms. In this condition these performers are said to dance and wail the livelong night. On one occasion Dauphin Myron could not sleep for their weeping.

The giver of the sun dance does not dance himself, as a rule, though he may. He usually stands in the center of the lodge with his back to the sacred pole, looking towards the door, which faces the south. There is an altar in the rear of the lodge, opposite the door. It is composed of a number of twigs hooped over and placed in two parallel rows leading up to several buffalo skulls varying from one to four in number, for the Indians cannot always find enough nowadays. Before these skulls four long stemmed stone pipes are supported on sticks. Sometimes a "spirit rock," a queerly shaped stone supposed to contain a spirit, is also placed there.

Although not supposed to drink, Ogimauwinini¹ said that at a dance which he attended the performers told the host that they could not stand it any more without water. He danced up to the center pole, blowing his whistle and holding a kettle. When he reached the pole he thrust his whistle against it, and held it there. Water gushed out of the

pole through this improvised spout and he caught it in the kettle and gave it to the others to drink. The water was undoubtedly the gift of the *Inīmākiwāk* (or *Pināsiwuk*), the thunderers, for this man had power over them and could call them whenever the country needed rain.

Another man wanted his little boy to get strength to dream. He tied him to the center stake and left him there, forcing him to do without food or drink. When exhausted, the lad fell asleep, and when he awoke he no longer felt pain, for power to withstand it had been granted him.

During the dance speeches were made about the gods in whose honor the rites were performed, and sermons were preached on upright living. Women could never give a sun dance, but might take part with the common herd. They were never starved nor cut.

THE SUN DANCE OF THE CANADIAN DAKOTA
By W. D. WALLIS

FOREWORD

The following account of the sun dance of the Dakota Indians was obtained by Dr. W. D. Wallis from native informants in the summer of 1914. Dr. Wallis spent the season under the auspices of the Division of Anthropology of the Geological Survey of Canada in a general study of the religion, mythology, social life and organization, and ceremonial life of the Canadian Sioux, a comparatively recent Manitoba offshoot of the Dakota (chiefly Wahpeton, it would seem). The present study is a selected portion of the voluminous manuscript submitted by Dr. Wallis. By authorization of the administrative authorities of the Geological Survey of Canada and by the courtesy of the American Museum of Natural History, Dr. Wallis's paper is published in the present series.

E. SAPIR

Head of Division of Anthropology,
Geological Survey of Canada.

CONTENTS

	PAGE.
FOREWORD	319
INTRODUCTION	323
THE SUN DANCE	326
PERSONAL NARRATIVES	330

INTRODUCTION

The accompanying discussion of the sun dance is taken from a large manuscript presenting the data collected by the author from the Dakota at Portage la Prairie and Griswold, Manitoba. The two groups of Indians concerned are in the main refugees from the Wahpeton of Minnesota who were participants in the massacre of 1862. Thus, their fundamental cultural traits should be those of the Eastern Dakota and the account here given of their sun dance ceremonies may be taken as fairly typical for the Eastern Dakota, in contradistinction to the western, or Teton division, as presented in a preceding section of this volume.

Since but a small section of Wahpeton culture is to be discussed its true perspective cannot be had unless we call attention to a few of the fundamental traits made clear in the larger manuscript of which this discussion is a part. Thus, from the unpublished data it is clear that with this group the sun dance is a shamanistic procedure. It is the initial ceremony for anyone taking up a shamanistic career. Thus an informant made the following statement bearing upon this point:—

A medicineman is known as *witca'stawakan*, "wakan man." Nearly all of them were with the thunders, so they themselves said, before they came to earth and were born here. While with the thunders, they traveled around with every thunderstorm, hunting a place wherein to be born, sometimes among the Indians, sometimes among the whites. Spying out the best place for nativity, some of them said they were to be born among whites, but they refused to have it so, preferring to be born among the Indians that they might have their customs and their dress. Some said that before birth they were warned that should they be born among the whites and not do what the thunders bade them do, they would be killed by the vengeful thunders. Wherefore all medicinemen chose rather to be born among Indians where they might do as commanded by the thunders (*waki'A*).

Some said the thunders told them *wakantankâ* (most *wakan*) had told the thunders to tell the medicinemen that they were to do as bidden by the thunders.¹ They were *wakantanka's* messengers. As soon as a man starts his career as a medicineman, he must announce to all the people the message given him by the thunders before birth, and, with the message, the fact that he was then bidden by the thunders to announce also that he had been bidden by them to deliver this message.

¹The thunders, while plural, are thought of collectively, not distributively, as a unity and "all the same," "only one thunder." But the converse sometimes occurs.

These medicinemen, prior to their birth, know everything that is going to happen: into what family they will be born and every event of their future life. In this, according to the informant, the testimonies of all concur. They must take part in every dance except the *wakanatcipi*.

Before birth they are promised by the thunders a sign as to the time when they are to start their career as medicinemen. The man or woman must be over twenty years of age, that is, old enough to comprehend and remember anything told them. When they have reached this stage of mental development, they make themselves ready to receive the sign which has been promised. It comes in a dream in which the thunders announce to them that the time is at hand when they are to begin their career.

The first thing they are assigned is the making of a sun dance which may last one, two, or three days, according to the directions which have been given them. The season of the year in which it is to be given—summer, winter, autumn, or spring—is also specified. This informative dream comes only in the winter. In it they are told that the sign will be such things as the appearance of leaves or blossoms, as the case may be, or a certain plant or flower. Four days after the appearance of the "sign" they make the sun dance.

While performing this they may neither eat nor drink. They turn their faces upward toward the sun, following it in its course across the heavens and without moving from their tracks while it is visible. Here they remain through the night. They may not speak, though they may smoke if a pipe is offered them.

In the sun they see different signs. They pray to it to have pity on them, to give them long life, promising to obey the sun throughout life; they ask it to tell the thunders that they will do their bidding through life. They ask power for their whole life even in its declining stages, telling the sun they are then doing what they have been bidden by the thunders to do, asking the sun on the strength of this good intention to impart strength for the carrying out of the thunders' behests. The power for their career they get from the sun. After this, in spite of the fast, however long it may have lasted, the man is stronger than before he entered upon it.

The ceremony is *wakan* and can be performed only at the time specified, yet all may see it. In fact, three days previously the man announces to all the people that he will hold a sun dance on the fourth day. On that day they make a place for him. They put up an oak pole; at the foot of this they place a stone painted red. Before birth they were told to use a

stone of this kind. Stone told them that *wakantanka* had told him he (stone) would help the medicineman in everything, giving him all the strength he might need.¹

The pole is painted red. "Now," say the medicinemen, "the thunders are angry because the white man has stopped the sun dance and they strike the Indians because of it, also the buildings of the white people and anything else belonging to them. In some towns the servants of the thunders, the winds, blow down buildings and scatter them into pieces as tokens of their anger. But stone that is used even after being ground up into fine pieces by the white man (to be used in concrete) still has power. They are the servants of the thunders and the lightning will therefore not disrupt them. Accordingly, stone houses stand, while wooden ones are blown down or destroyed by lightning.

About five years ago a medicineman was given a message by the thunders to the effect that the wind would turn over the buildings of the Indians no matter where they might be, but, at the same time, the winds would not injure the Indians.

The medicinemen have power to do anything they wish, yet they cannot do this of themselves but must pray to all the powers, the sun, trees, stones, river, lakes, grass, etc., asking first if it will be proper to do the contemplated thing. Old man Pashee saw one medicineman, whose power was discredited, put a large pot over the fire and boil meat in it. He removed the pot, reached down into the boiling water about three feet, and pulled out the piece of meat which was at the bottom of the vessel, without suffering scald or the least discomfiture.

The familiar way of becoming a medicineman, is, as described, by acquisition of the power from the thunders previous to birth. It seems, however, that the clown, who is looked upon as the most powerful medicineman, acquires his power from the *wakan* clown, directly or indirectly, and other accounts show that specific powers may come from any of the *wakan* beings, such as the stone, spider, buffalo, gull, dog, turtle, etc. The distinction may not be absolute, but in general, medicine powers acquired in the orthodox manner before birth remain with one during the greater portion of one's life and these are the most common, whereas those acquired from specific *wakan* beings such as we have mentioned, are specific and occasional.

¹The Indians use the stone for power. So do the white men; of it they build the houses that last the longest.

THE SUN DANCE

Those performing the sun dance look up steadily at the sun and pray to it. The thunders grant long life to those who perform it and they will return safely from the subsequent war party against the Cree, as will also every member of the party, and they will kill as many Cree as they wish. While gazing at the sun, the performer asks for strength to complete the dance. The flesh to which the man was tied was sometimes torn out at the end of the ceremony, sometimes not. When this happened the singers gave the war whoop, for this was always the end of the ceremony.

Those who tear out the flesh are not the powerful medicinemen, but are those who cannot longer endure the torture and fatigue. Those who endure it four nights and four days are afterwards powerful medicinemen. Medicinemen always say they do not feel the pain—the *wakan* beings give them assistance and power to endure it, so that they neither become fagged, nor do they feel hunger and thirst. The thunders told them that if they could endure it as they were told, they would grant them long life and assist them when treating the sick.

The pole which is used may be gotten and set up only by chaste unmarried men. All those who help do this are previously asked if they have had intercourse with women; if they confess to this, they may not participate. This requirement is said to have acted as a strong deterrent on the passions of the young men of the tribe. If one not qualified fails to confess and subsequently participates in the preparation for the ceremony, he will be killed in the next fight. This restraint is now gone and morals are going too, say the old men. No such test applies to the singers.

The sun dance seems never to be held during the winter, nor after the leaves have fallen. This is said to be because there are no thunderstorms then and it is always the thunders who announce that the time has come to perform it. The man who is to perform it does not do so until directed by the thunders.

Women are not allowed to come close to the ground where a sun dance is being performed, though they may watch it from a distance; nor may they stand to the windward of the devotee. That would take away all his strength and all his *wakan* would desert him—he could not endure it half an hour. If the performer be a woman, these taboos do not apply to her sex. A woman may not touch the pole or any of the objects used in the ceremony. After the completion of the dance, every-

thing is removed except the pole; this is left standing until it rots and falls to the ground. When the ground has been cleared, women may pass over it, but under no circumstances may they pass close to the pole.

The buffalo skulls which are used in the dance are old ones from which the flesh has rotted so that only horns and bony framework remain.

The man making the dance always takes a sweatbath before, as well as after, the performance. He selects whomsoever else he wishes to assist and they take the sweatbath with him.

During the intervals of rest, denoted as the time for smoking, the calls of nature are attended to. If the devotee stops four times a day to smoke, the periods will be at noon, sunset, about the middle of the morning and of the afternoon. Similar intervals are observed through the night. Through the night there is a gradual reversal of the change of direction observed through the day, perhaps owing to a belief that this is facing the sun in its return to the east. The dancing at night is in the tipi erected for this purpose, the devotee going out to the ceremonial ground a short time before sunrise.

There is no organization of those who have performed the sun dance, and it appears that no bond of fellowship or of mutual aid holds them together.

It was stated that generally a man performs the sun dance but once in his lifetime, those cases in which several performances are to be placed to the credit of an individual being exceptional. This is probably true, and the exceptional cases are frequent in narration, because they are exceptional. It was said that but seldom is a dance performed by the son of a man who has performed one—a statement equally difficult to challenge or to corroborate. The reason given for this lack of filial following is that one must be told by the thunders, before birth, to perform it and the thunders later indicate when the appointed time has arrived. A man never assigns paternal advice as the reason for making the dance. The story told below, in which the performer handed the dance to his grandson, was said by the informant to be the only instance of the kind known to him. In the instance referred to, the boy had not had dreams, but was taught everything by his grandfather who, at the same time, prayed the *wakan* beings to make his grandson like unto himself, so that he might carry on the work which the grandfather had been performing.

The skull of the buffalo is used because the buffalo has more power than the other animals; it was born first, is the "head" of all the

animals, and so has more power than any of the others. No other skull was used, and this was used only in case the devotee was so directed in his dream.

The feathers of the wild goose were used because, in a dream, the wild goose declared that it was the first bird created and would impart strength in the sun dance to endure it through the days and nights; it could fly faster than any other bird, keeping on the wing for four or five days, or longer. So, if they used it in the sun dance, they could march for any number of days and also would be able to run fast. Other birds were stronger; but the wild goose was friendly with these birds and would also ask them to impart strength to the devotees.

The sweatbath is taken both before and after every performance. This is to tell the stone first of all that the devotee is about to perform the sun dance. The stone had said it was the first thing made on earth, and, no matter what enterprise one was about to embark upon, the person was to pray to the stone first, and the stone would give him strength for the undertaking.

After the stone is heated, water is poured upon it, and it is asked to wash the performer clean for the sun dance which he is about to undertake. When the performance is over, another sweatbath is taken in order to wash the paint off hands, face, and body. The ground on which the devotee has been standing is *wakan* and all the earth from it must be washed from his feet. He asks the stone to grant him long life, adding that he will be ready at any time to do whatever he is asked to do.

When a man intends to perform the sun dance, and has had a dream directing him to do so, he invites an old man or old men, who come and sit in his tipi and listen while he tells his dream. He says that before he was born the power in the east told him to perform the sun dance, after birth, at a designated time (for example, when the first child was born, or at a certain time of the year specified.) After being handed over to the thunders, he was told by them to make the sun dance at a certain time, saying the sun must guard him during the day. The sun tells the thunders to tell the man when the time has come to perform the dance. If the man does not comply, the sun carries this information to the thunders and they will punish him. If he fails altogether in the performance, the thunders will kill him.

The buffalo skull, the stone, the wild goose feathers, are used as the result of a dream from them severally, they having gone to the thunders and asked if the man might use them in the dance. The man is warned that if he does not do exactly as bidden, he will be killed. Everyone who

performs the sun dance is so directed by the person in the east, then by the thunders, and then by the sun. What he is to offer to the thunders, for example, a cloth, or a calf hide, is told him by the man in the east or by the sun, and the thunders know what is expected of him. Sometimes the thunders tell the man to offer them specified things. This is merely repaying them for their telling the man what he is to do. If, before birth, a man is told by the man in the east to perform the sun dance, the thunders, the sun, and all the *wakan* beings to whom the man prays, are immediately aware of this without being informed that he has been so directed.

The man in the east is the only one who directs people to perform the sun dance. When the devotee has led out the war party, returned, and celebrated the war dance, all the powers to whom he prays in the sun dance go to the man in the east and dance there because they rejoice that their directions have been followed. All of the Dakota pray to the sun and the above-mentioned powers and obtain strength from them when they go out to fight. The Cree, perforce, have prayed to other gods for victory. Hence, if the Dakota are victors, the *wakan* beings to whom they have prayed accept it as a victory of their own and hold the dance because they rejoice at having won against the other *wakan* beings.

In the old days, every medicineman was directed to perform the sun dance and was promised ability to kill all the Cree he might wish, when he led out a war party. The thunders make no mention of the war dance, for this is invariably celebrated when scalps are brought to the camp. Every dance must be held as the thunders have directed and the devotee will then win the fight when he leads a war party. Such a war party is certain to vanquish the Cree. In fact, they never went out on a war party without first celebrating one of the dances, though this need not necessarily be the sun dance.

It is said that if the flute used in the sun dance be loaned to another, the owner will hear it whenever and wherever it is played.

One man said he had seen those performing the sun dance cry, not with pain but "because he feels so sorry, just as your preachers do sometimes when they read the Bible. I have seen them cry when reading it, they feel so badly. It is just like that, not from pain, when the man cries while making the sun dance."

A woman at Portage La Prairie was told by the thunders in a dream to make the sun dance when certain (unidentified) grass went to seed. She did not do it.

Later, she told the people that in a dream she had been directed to make the sun dance, and asked them to prepare the ground for it. They did so, erecting an oak pole painted red. She began the dance about three hours before sunset. It was a perfectly clear day. Just as she was about to begin, loud rumbling of thunder was heard, although the sky was cloudless. In an hour or more a heavy thunderstorm came; the lightning struck the pole and split it in two, though it did not injure the woman. This was a warning to her that she must perform the dance at the time set and not later. The thunders could have struck her with the lightning if they had wanted to do so, but they wished merely to give her this warning.

If the sun comes to a man and tells him to do a certain thing which the man fails to perform, he will be killed. A man was told to perform the sun dance on a certain day. When the appointed day arrived he had made no preparations. The sun rose and still no preparations were made. The man remained within his tipi. About noon he went out. As he left the tipi he fell dead. As a punishment for his disobedience the sun had burned his chest.

A Wahpeton at Portage La Prairie gave a description of a sun dance which he had seen performed by a Blood Indian when a boy. This man preferred singers of another tribe and chose Assiniboin for this service. A red pole was put up. To this he was tied by a thong fastened to a stick, the two ends of which were inserted under the flesh on either side of the sternum. This thong was about the thickness of a moccasin lace and could be broken without much difficulty. After being painted red in preparation for that dance it became so strong that no man could break it. He danced four nights and three days, announcing on the fourth morning that he was going to break the thong that day or tear his flesh. He did the latter, thus freeing himself. He walked away as strong and as vigorous, seemingly, as any other man. When seen walking about among the people next day he did not appear the least bit fatigued or weakened by his four days' and nights' performance.

PERSONAL NARRATIVES

The contents of the following sections are individual narratives of particular sun dance performances, including one covering the sun dance activities of a distinguished shaman. They are given in this concrete form for notwithstanding the unavoidable repetition of details in their entirety they give a fair idea of the place of the ceremony among these Indians.

1. The following is an account of a performance of the sun dance by one who made it a few years ago. To start at the beginning: I was sick. All the medicinemen and physicians from town treated me, giving me different medicines, whatever they thought was remedial. When I found that one was making no progress, I tried another. Nothing helped me in the least; nothing seemed to be in the least efficacious. I invited Wanduta, a clown medicineman living at Griswold, who was at that time in Portage La Prairie. He treated me. The old man said he thought he saw something, but he could not clearly understand its significance; he would treat me four times and try to discover the cause of my sickness. When treating me for the last time, he said he learned that I had been directed to perform the sun dance and had not done so and this was the cause of my illness. I must do it at once. I was to procure an oak tree, a black cloth with blue stripes along the same to represent the moon. Also, I was to have a white cloth with blue stripes for the sun. He said that when I had performed the dance I would recover.

After making the sun dance, I was as well as before and have been well ever since. The cause of my illness had been hidden from the other medicinemen and from Wanduta himself. Other medicinemen have difficulty in finding out things, but a clown medicineman can find out anything.

In the very first place, when I was a boy just beginning to walk, I had a dream in which men were bringing me down to earth in a nest. They said they would inform me later what that nest was. That is all I remember about it. Wanduta said these men had not instructed me in another dream when to perform it and some of the *wakan* beings were keeping me 'in the dark.'

I grew to be a young man and married the woman who is now my wife. Three sons were born to us. All died. Three daughters were born to us and they died. There were six children and we lost all of them. After the death of all my children I thought that the nest in which I was brought down was a token that I should perform the sun dance. If I had performed this ceremony before I married, thought I, all of my children might still be alive.

In a dream I received a name which I gave to my grandchild. The name was Ide' Amani, Walk-burning. It is a thunder name; for the thunders set fire to all that they strike while they are walking around. That is the only name I had ever bestowed. After that I never named anyone until the old man found out about my failure to perform the sun dance.

The *wakan* beings had taken away all of my children, severally, to punish me. My sons became sick. Medicinemen and physicians treated them, but to no purpose. Thus it was with the first four children. The fifth child fell sick, suddenly, about noon, and died about noon on the following day. No one could learn the reason for its death. A little while after this, the sixth one, while playing about with some other little girls, fell in front of the house, and lay there quietly. We picked her up and found her dead, her neck broken. There was no way in which she could have broken her neck, yet broken it was.

A short while after this I became sick. Later, I found out about my failure to perform the sun dance and was told I would improve if I performed it. Every summer thereafter, during the remainder of my life, I was to get two cloths of the kind described, paint them as they were painted in the dance, and offer them to the sun and moon. This I have been doing every summer since making the first sun dance.

While I was sick, I weakened gradually, one part of my body being first affected, then another. So, day after day, my strength ebbed away. Thus, during the early part of the summer, I was sick several weeks before the performance and, a few weeks after the ceremony, I was better. My leg was very sore.¹

One afternoon after the clown had given me this information and had gone away, I bade two of the grown men procure a pole, and arrange the grounds. I painted a stone blue and the cloths as above described. These latter I told the men to fasten to the pole. Then, in a dream, I heard the song. When all was ready, I did not (as is usual) take the sweatbath. When the singers came I taught them the song. My leg was sore and I remained seated in front of the pole. Because I was sick the singers stopped at frequent intervals to allow me to rest. The ceremony started at dark and was over before sunrise. The singers wanted me to continue the dance through the day, but I told them I was afraid to do this because it was against the law to have the sun dance. When I danced only at night the white people would not be apprised of it, and, as for continuing during the day, the *wakan* beings knew that it was contrary to law: So it would be all right if I performed it at night and not at all through the day.

A few days before preparing the ceremony, I suddenly heard the song. Some person may have told me in a dream; but, now that the powers who had been concealing this from me knew that the clown had

¹Here the narrator exhibited a long severe scar on the upper leg, such as gangrene or a carbuncle (?) might leave.

told me about it, the song came to me suddenly during the day, as though it were a voice. (My wife today when picking berries heard a voice singing a sun dance song. She sang it to me an hour or two ago, but I paid no attention to it. The person who is about to perform the sun dance receives the song either in a dream or from a voice heard during the day). The song given me was as follows:—

waki'ya itca'kmâia

Thunders brought me down to earth.

makpi bobAdu'

Clouds blowing in every

bAdu' wa'ye

direction I came through.

While dancing I saw the spirit of my cousin who was one of the singers. The following winter this man died suddenly of heart failure.

Other songs used by him were as follows:—

wa'wa yika' hinAzi waye' (repeat ad. lib.)

Look on they stand I make them.

"I make the spirits come and look on." (i.e., the good spirits of all game)

en'ka tama'dja hi'kta sA'djA wa'nahi

Dog thin he will be here I think he has come.

waga'sotA (repeat ad. lib.)

(He) kills everything.

"I think a thin dog will be here. He has come now. He kills everything." (Meaning, 'He will kill all the evil spirits about the man making the sun dance.')

Another informant gave the following description of the sun dance as performed by this man about 1901:—

He had lost two children. A boy fell from a wagon, was run over by it, and died in about a week. Scarcely a month had passed when his daughter fell sick, dying in four days. The following spring he told the people he was going to make the sun dance as he had been instructed to do so by the thunders. Moreover, he himself was at this time very ill and believed he would die if he did not obey the command. Therefore, said he, "If I must go to jail for making it, then let them put me in jail, but I shall feel better for having done it." He asked the others to assist him, saying the time appointed by the thunders was the ripening of the saskatoon berries (i.e., about the last of July). Most of the men were then away; those in the settlement made the preparations.

Two men procured an oak tree about four or five inches in diameter. The limbs were allowed to stay on near the top, the rest were lopped off, the bark removed, and the pole painted with red earth. The ground was cleared in front of the man's tipi. In the center of this space the pole was erected. The cleared space was encircled with a row of leaves and a larger circle of leaves enclosed this. The smaller circle enclosed ground that might be entered only by the devotee himself. Between these two circles, where the ground was not disturbed, and farthest from the tipi of the devotee, sat the six singers about the drum. A circle of red feathers was put within the smaller circle of leaves, almost touching them. Around the pole was a circle of red feathers as also around the stone painted red and placed near the pole in the direction of the tipi, and about the pipe which was between the stone and the tipi. Between the pipe and the tipi was a bunch of red feathers on which the devotee was to stand. Red feathers were hung at the top of the pole in four pieces of cloth folded as nearly as possible so as to present a square bottom. About the middle of the pole two pieces of cloth were suspended. The circles of leaves and feathers enclosing the sacred objects were incomplete; instead of closing they opened out in a path to the tipi of the devotee.

Just before sunset the drummers took their places. The man who was to perform the dance had stripped naked except for a loin cloth, and had covered his whole body with red earth. He now sang the song that had been given him in his dream, repeating it three times. Meanwhile the drummers and singers were attentively listening that they might learn it from him.

When he had sung the song four times, he stepped out of his tipi along the leaf and feather-lined path leading toward the feathers, the pipe, the stone, the pole, and the drummers. After stepping on the feathers he might not move or speak. He stopped in front of them and made an announcement to those present in about the following words: "I had been told to do this by the thunders more than a year ago. Now it is too late to profit much by performing it for my boy is dead and my girl is dead. They lie yonder buried under the earth. Yet, I wish to save my own life. I would have done it at the time appointed a year ago, but for the fact that it is against the law and I was afraid to do it. But now I must do it. If I have to go to jail it will not matter for I shall save my life and I shall feel better when it has been done."

The sun was now setting. Having made this announcement he stepped on the feathers, standing erect, with hands dropped by his side and face turned up toward the heavens. This pose he must retain with-

out a variation save such as was involved in turning the pipe and himself toward the sun, during the entire time that he was there. The singers now began the song they had learned from him, keeping time on the drum. When there are enough men to be had they relieve one another. In this case the same men sang continuously. The singing must not be interrupted as long as the dance lasts. In this case it lasted through the night and all of the following day.

When the sun appeared in the east the devotee turned his face toward it, at the same time pointing the stem of the pipe toward it with the bowl toward the stone. This was moved from time to time, so that the stem would always point toward the sun, being elevated at the proper angle, and the bowl would be toward the stone. With his upturned face the man followed the sun until it sank below the western horizon. As it disappeared from sight he stepped from his place. The music ceased. He then thanked all of the people for their assistance, adding that he was very glad it had been done, and he felt much better for having done it, let the punishment by the white people be what it might. He withdrew to his tipi, the singers went home, and the dance was finished. After this he began to recover and has been hale and hearty since.

Before withdrawing to his tipi, he told the people that while standing there he had seen two people going along the road toward the east. They went to a house near by. Later, at this house a great many people were seen running about talking excitedly as though some one had been murdered. Later, a third person came out of this house, joined the other two and all proceeded toward the east. None of the spectators had seen any one passing by.

It turned out to be as he had foreseen. In August of that year a man died in a house to the west of the ground where the sun dance had been held; in the autumn a woman in the same part of the settlement died. In December a woman in a house east of this ground poisoned her husband, having put the poison in tea which she gave him to drink, and later confessed the deed. It was these two which he had seen going past (souls of the dead travel to the east); the house where he had seen the commotion and the third person joining these two came from the house of the man who was later poisoned by his wife.

2. A man invited an old man to his tipi, telling him he had had a dream about the sun dance and was ready to perform it. He bade him go and obtain men to assist him. The old man went out and obtained the young men. The man asked them to procure a buffalo skull, while

others were to bring the pole. He told them to paint the buffalo skull blue and place it at the base of the pole. He told them to wind a long leather thong about the pole.

Before beginning the dance he announced that he had not wound the long leather thong about the pole because he was going to kill Cree, but because he wished to steal their horses. When this had been arranged and everything was ready for him, he took the sweatbath. He passed the pipe around, but no one would accept it. He lighted it, smoked, and passed it around, saying that, though none of them were going to join him, still they were going to assist, and he wished them to smoke with him.

When all was ready, he began the dance in the tipi. Next morning, when he walked outside, he announced that he would dance four days. He danced until the end of the fourth day and stopped. He took the sweatbath. Having finished the sweatbath, he announced that while dancing he saw in the west a big thunderstorm; among the thunders a man was whirling about like a bit of paper in the vortex of a whirlwind. He feared this might be some person in the camp who had been told to perform the sun dance and had not done so, and the thunders were coming for him. He felt badly over this; still it was no fault of his, but the fault solely of the offender, whoever he might be. A man who knew he was told to do the sun dance, then told his parents that he had been directed to perform it, but thought the time had not yet arrived, and told the man who had made this dance, that the time had not yet arrived. Yet he was nervous and uneasy, knowing that he was the one referred to, and decided to perform the dance then. He had young men procure the pole and make ready for the dance. It rained so hard that they could not stay outside. A lightning bolt struck this man, killing him, while one struck the pole, one struck the stone, and one the ground which they were preparing. That was another lesson given by the thunders to the people that they might learn to obey them when told to make the sun dance. He knew he had been told to make the sun dance, and could not escape death, yet he had too often postponed it from time to time, thinking that, meanwhile, no mishap would befall him.

When men forget the dream telling them to make the sun dance, the lightning merely strikes their tipi, or the ground close to them, to remind them of what they have been told. Those who remember and still do not perform it, are killed instantly.

3. One night, while it was raining and thundering, a man who had been sitting in his tipi went outside. The lightning struck close to him,

but did not injure him. He was shocked and lay there a few minutes; then rose and went into the tipi, staggering like a drunken man. His wife attempted to catch hold of him, but he would not allow it, telling her not to touch him. She gave him an emetic. When he had recovered, she asked him if there was any reason why the lightning should strike close to him. He said he had had a dream about making the sun dance, but thought the time appointed had already passed. The other men told him he must make it. When he had heard them say this, he invited young men, telling them he was to perform the sun dance, but thought the time designated by the thunders had already passed. Even so he was prepared to perform it if they would procure the pole and make the ground ready.

They made four hoops, painted them red, and fastened them together with string. He bade them attach the hoops thus to the middle of the pole. Into a birch bowl of water he stirred red earth and placed the same at the base of the pole. Before beginning the dance he asked all the men present to drink of this water. A man went among them bidding them come and drink of the water. When the pole had been procured and everything was ready, he announced that he would dance two nights and two days. On the last day, about sunset, before finishing the dance, there would be a big thunderstorm, but this would do no damage. The thunders were coming to see him dance and would stop at the ceremonial ground. They began the singing and he danced the first night. Early in the morning, he went to the ceremonial ground, dancing there all day and all night. The second day, at the time mentioned, there was a big thunderstorm. He stopped, took the sweatbath, and invited all of the men in the tipi to smoke with him. All went in and smoked with him. He said he had not given the sun dance because he wished to fight or to steal horses, but was going to take care of all the children (meaning the sick ones in the camp), so that as long as he lived they should have plenty of meat; every man who went to hunt would obtain what he desired. After that he was one of the ablest medicinemen in treating the sick.

Every man who went to hunt always obtained buffalo, deer, elk, or other game.

4. This is a story about a young man who was married. He lived with his father and mother and brothers and sisters. They were eating their evening meal during a big thunderstorm. The lightning came through the smoke hole of the tipi and struck the fire, scattering ashes and firebrands all about. It did no further damage. All the occupants of the

tipi were shocked. Others ran to their assistance and gave them emetics. When the stricken people vomited they spat out matter which looked like a composite of gunpowder. After this vomiting the place had the odor of gun smoke.

The young man had been told to perform the sun dance upon the birth of his first child, and had failed to comply. He said he knew he was to do it then, but had postponed it too long, saying he had intended to do it later, and thinking that no mishap would befall him. The thunders had done this merely to frighten him. He asked the men to come to his tipi on the following day, and told them about the sun dance which he was going to celebrate. All prepared for it. He asked those who came over to procure a pole, while others looked for a buffalo skull. When all was ready, he passed the pipe around, asking if anyone wished to participate. Three men said they would join him. When all were ready he took the sweatbath with them.

Having finished the sweatbath they prepared for the dance, the leader asking them to cut the flesh above his shoulders. The others asked him what he was going to do. He said he would drag the buffalo skull without and would dance with a string fastened to his breast. The others thought he had not been told to do this and that, in consequence, he would be killed by lightning. He insisted that this was, in truth, his dream.

They cut the flesh above both shoulders and fastened the buffalo skull to him. When they had tied the skull to him, he danced with the three men.

Next morning they came out of the tipi and danced until sunset. He had a smoke and told them what the thunders had done to him, saying he knew he was to make the sun dance, but had waited too long. All the while he intended to do it later on, but after the thunders had frightened him he was afraid to postpone it any longer; all were ready to assist him when he needed them. He had gone around the ground dragging the skull behind him, and had said these words before stepping into his tracks. He now bade them unfasten the skull and tie the string to the flesh of his back. He stepped into his place and began the dance. They danced four days and nights.

On the fifth day he tore out the flesh. He took the sweatbath along with the three men, ate, dressed, and announced that he was glad to have finished the dance and was pleased that the singers had helped him. He said he was asked to do one more thing, namely, lead a war party. A few days later he told them that when the last quarter of the

moon was over he would lead out a war party; meanwhile, he was taking sweatbaths, and making fighting feasts. At the time appointed the party went out. On the fourth day they encountered two families of Cree, returned with the scalps and held a big war dance. After this all were pleased over what the man had accomplished.

5. This is the story of a woman who performed the sun dance and died shortly thereafter. Though a short story, it shows that some of the people who do not believe in the sun dance encounter misfortunes. One time a woman was sick. A few men went to her and asked her if she knew anything about the sun dance. She replied that she did. They asked her if she was going to perform it. She consented. She bade them get the pole and a stone for her. They procured the pole and the stone, painting the latter red.

When all was ready they began the singing and she danced, having her face painted red with a blue circle about it. She continued the dance all night and all day. After this she recovered and seemed to be entirely well. The fourth night after the sun dance there was a thunderstorm. The lightning struck the pole she had used and splintered it into small pieces down to the ground. Four days after the pole had been broken by the thunders, she died. The Dakota talked about her, deciding she might have made the ceremony when knowing nothing about it, merely imitating performances she had seen. If she had had a dream about it, the thunders would not have broken the pole in the way that they did.

6. A man made the sun dance in the autumn after the leaves had turned. The thunders, in a dream, had told him to perform the sun dance. He did not do it that summer, though this was the time designated by the thunders. His only child died suddenly. The boy had been playing outside of the tipi. Suddenly he fell and was unable to rise. They ran to him and picked him up, but he breathed his last, then and there.

The man had another dream in which another *wakan* being told him the thunders had taken the child because of the father's disobedience and told him that if he did not perform the sun dance the last thunder in the west, while going to his home in the east, would kill him.

When asked to perform it, the man said he would do it and perhaps would repeat it the ensuing summer, but, as to the latter, he was not sure. Next morning he invited some men to his tipi and told them he was going to perform the sun dance, saying he had been so directed by the thunders. He had waited too long; the thunders were angry, and had taken his child. There were other thunders in the west who would

be the last to leave; as they were traveling to their home in the east they would kill him. They procured a pole, put up a tipi and made all the preparations. That night he started the dance, continuing it throughout the following day. At sunset he stopped, had a sweatbath, ate, and then smoked. He thanked them for their assistance. His only regret was over his one child and he alone was responsible; he knew he should make the sun dance, yet he had failed to perform it.

He wished all the young men to go out hunting next morning. They would get a bear—he had secured it while dancing. He wished them to bring it home and cook a piece of it for the *wo'towa'hopi*, or hunting feast.

When he had finished the dance and the men had brought the bear to the camp, he made the hunting feast. In the autumn and winter he announced that he would make the hunting feast. In the following spring, when the leaves were beginning to bud, he would perform the sun dance, as he had been told and prior to which he had already performed one in order to save his life. I remember the time. All my brothers were invited to these feasts and took part in them. Upon their return from the feast I heard them telling what this man had said. During the remainder of the autumn and the winter he took the sweatbath at various times, then a few days later he would make the hunting feast, continuing thus until the eve of the time designated for the sun dance.

One day, after finishing the sweatbath, he announced that the time for him to make the sun dance was approaching. After the next sweatbath he announced that he had been told in a dream that the time for the sun dance was near at hand and that he would perform it the following morning. In the morning all the men came, for they had heard the night before that he was going to perform the dance the following morning. When all was ready—the pole, the stone and the pipe,—he took another sweatbath and passed around the pipe, saying that those who were willing to join him should smoke the pipe. One man said he would join him and lighted the pipe. Another said he would join him and smoked the pipe. Thus it went until four had volunteered. All of them prepared for the dance and painted themselves. They danced that night.

Next morning they went out to the ground; he announced that they would dance two days and another night; when these two days were over they would stop. They continued the dance through the day, the next night, and the second day. At the end of the second day they had the sweatbath, ate, and smoked. He told them he was glad he had finished the dance; he was still grieving for his child and during the dance had

been wondering why he had not performed the sun dance at first, as directed; he had performed it after the death of his child, but that was too late; he was glad to have finished the dance. He announced that in four days he was going out on a war party and all were to be ready. When the four days were over he started. On the fourth day at noon they encountered the Cree, as predicted, killed them, and returned with their scalps. All were pleased to see them return with the scalps. They had a big war dance.

7. One time a woman had a dream in which the thunders told her to make the sun dance. She told her husband she had been directed in a dream to perform the sun dance, and wished to do so, since the thunders had conveyed these directions to her in a dream. She had been told to perform it when a son had been born to her, had grown to goodly size, and could move around lithely. She was to perform the dance in company with this boy.

Her husband was pleased with the information and had young men procure the pole and assist in the preparations. When the pole was ready she put on a white gown with perpendicular red stripes, and painted her face red, encircling it with blue. The lad was painted red. They began the dance. She announced that she would dance but one day, as she did not wish to subject her son to hardships. They finished the dance at nightfall. She then directed her husband to take the sweatbath in company with her son, saying she was going to the river to bathe, and added, that there would be a big thunderstorm. The people urged her to take the bath. They fixed the boy and gave him the sweatbath. While she was bathing a big thunderstorm came. It was one of the heaviest thunderstorms and rainstorms ever known. She said the boy was still quite young, yet she wished him to have an eagle feather on his head while young and for this reason had performed the sun dance. Soon after this a war party went out. The lad was the youngest of the party, but killed two Cree.

After that he was a good fighter. Every time this woman went to bathe in the river there was a severe thunderstorm. This story is told about her because every time she went to bathe in the river there was a severe thunderstorm.

8. One time in the winter a man said he had had a dream in which the thunders directed him to perform the sun dance. The pole was procured the following evening. He danced all that night and all the following day, wearing snowshoes painted red. He finished the dance that day at sunset. A few weeks later he was taken sick. During the

remainder of the winter he did not feel well and his ill-health continued through the spring. The first thunderstorm killed the man. The Dakota said they supposed the man had made up the performance without being told to do so by the thunders, while some said that perhaps he had done it in advance of the time—for, on the day when he performed it, the sun was shining brightly. (When one performs the sun dance, the sun must shine all day so that the devotee can gaze upon it.) They tried to have the medicinemen find out why he had been killed, but none could do so.

9. A woman had a dream in which the thunders told her to perform the sun dance. She was to perform it on the second day. Next day she told her husband she wished to perform it, and he expressed his willingness for her to do so. That evening they procured the pole and arranged the ground. She wore a white gown, had her face painted red, with a circle of blue about it, and announced that she was performing the sun dance because directed by the thunders to do so; if she did not perform it that night the thunders would come on the following day and kill her; wherefore she wished to perform it now. She stepped into the circle. She danced all night. In the afternoon of the following day a big thunderstorm approached. It was the thunderstorm which was going to kill her in case she failed to perform the dance. She kept on dancing and the thunderstorm did not come near her. It appeared in the west, separated there, one portion going to the south of her, one portion to the north, and reunited when in the east. She danced throughout the day.

When she had finished the dance she told the men she was glad she had finished it and thanked them for singing for her. She said the thunderstorm which they had seen was coming to punish her, but when the thunders saw her dancing, they said they were pleased to see her holding the dance and would not punish her, but would go to the south or north and allow her to finish it. They were going to the person in the east to tell him she was holding the dance. She was thankful the thunders had not interfered with her, but had allowed her to finish the dance. She said she was not going to dance longer and stepped out of the circle.

When, a few days later, a party of Dakota went out to fight, she bade her husband join the party, saying they would encounter only one Cree; though there would be many men in the party, her husband, and no other, would kill the Cree. He got ready and went out to join the party. When the fight was over she heard a number of people saying that although there were a great many men in the war party, her husband was the only one who killed a Cree.

This story about what the woman said about the thunders, and about her husband going out on a large war party and being the only one to kill a Cree, is told to show that her words came true.

10. A man had a dream early in the summer in which he was told by the thunders that when the *wi'tcape'tcA* weed turned black he was to perform the sun dance. Everybody knew that he was to perform the dance. When the time came he announced its arrival. All were pleased that he was going to perform the dance. He requested four men to procure the pole. When they had the pole he told them to procure a red cloth, as he had given one to the sun. They prepared a buffalo calf hide and fastened it also to the pole, as he announced that he had given it to the moon.

He began the dance at dark. About midnight he sat down to smoke. He saw all of the people running about in great excitement and announced that in the morning, before he had finished the dance, something would probably happen. He danced until morning. In the morning he sat down to smoke, announcing what he had seen, and bidding the men be ready, as it was coming closer all the time. He then resumed the dance. At noon he stopped again to have another smoke. He announced that he had seen the Cree and bade them be prepared, as the happening he had referred to would take place before he had finished the dance. Toward sunset a boy went out to fix his father's tipi, without the knowledge of his parents, and was killed by the Cree. All the young men went out in pursuit, the old men taking the places of those who had been singing and thus finishing the dance.

When the dance was over he announced that he was glad it was finished and thanked all of those who had assisted him. He said the sun dance was a bit difficult for a man to perform, added that he was very grateful to them for their assistance, and stepped out of his tracks. When he had taken the sweatbath and had dressed, he ate, and the performance was complete.

The killing of the boy was the event referred to by him. While the old men were singing the young men went out for the Cree and returned with their scalps. This story is told about the man because he knew the Cree were coming, and knew beforehand what was going to happen.

11. A man told his friends he had been directed to perform the sun dance at a certain time and wished to do it before the time appointed. He asked whether it would be dangerous to perform it a little while before the time appointed. They told him that when one departed from the appointed time it was immaterial whether it was anticipated or

postponed. He said he was afraid to wait until the appointed time, because a few weeks previously a woman had been killed for failing to perform it; he was afraid to delay and wanted to perform it before the appointed time. When he had told them he wished to perform it, his friends put up a tipi in a clearing in the bush. He told them to make two hoops, one slightly larger than the other. To each of them he tied four strings. The small hoop was tied close to the top of the pole, the larger one near the center of it. He filled his pipe and asked each man if he would participate. Only one man volunteered to join him. This man said he had been told to perform the sun dance, and, though the appointed time had not yet arrived, he would take part in this one. The leader told the singers he would dance two days. They cut the flesh at his shoulders and fastened eagle feathers there.

He danced two days. Before beginning the dance he procured a birchbark bowl, put water into it, mixed in red earth, and said that when he had finished dancing the second day, he wished all the women, children, and men, to drink of it. On the first day he rested four times to smoke. The second day he danced until sunset. When he had finished they arranged the sweatbath tipi. After the sweatbath they gave him food to eat and water to drink. He said that at the full moon he would lead out a war party. He bade them watch the moon—which was then in the quarter—and be ready. When the moon was full he went out to fight. The fourth day he secured two Cree families. They returned with the scalps and had a big war dance.

12. In a dream a woman was told by the thunders to perform the sun dance at that time. She told her dream to her husband next morning, saying she was going to perform the sun dance. He said there was no reason for her to do so—that he was averse to seeing women engaged in such performances. Next morning she told him she had had another dream, telling her she must perform the dance, and added, that she wished to comply. He would not permit it, saying, that even though she performed it, she could not go out to fight the Cree and it would be useless for her to perform it. He knew nothing about medicinemen and medicine-women.

They were living in a tipi. On the following morning, when all the people had heard that the woman wished to perform the sun dance and her husband would not permit it, they begged her to do so. She replied that she would not do so since her husband would not permit it. There was a thunderstorm the ensuing night and the woman was killed by the thunders. At the time she was holding a small child in her arms and her

husband was sitting by her. Neither of the others was injured, only the woman was killed.

This story was told to show what the thunders could do if anyone disobeyed them. The woman had been anxious to perform the sun dance, but her husband would not permit it.

13. A man fell suddenly sick during the winter and was about to die. In a dream he learned that the *wakan* beings were angry because he had not performed the sun dance in the summer at the time appointed. He told the people the powers would give him another opportunity, but when the appointed time arrived, the following summer, if he failed to perform it, they would kill him.

When the snow had disappeared that spring he was still sick. He invited young men to his tipi, bade them make incisions in the flesh on his shoulder and fasten eagle feathers there. They made incisions in the skin on each shoulder and fastened feathers there. He filled a pipe, went into the bush, fastened the pipe to a branch, and the branch to an oak tree. Then, holding the stem of the pipe toward the west, he prayed to the thunders, asking them to forgive his disobedience, saying he had fastened eagle feathers to his cut flesh; he now cut out the flesh and put the feathers on the oak tree. "In the spring, when the leaves of this tree have reached the proper size, I will perform the sun dance," said he.

In the spring, when his condition had improved, he said he was going to perform the sun dance; he bade them get the pole and make everything ready. They built a sweatbath tipi. When it was ready he went into it and prepared himself by taking the sweatbath. He then came out, and, before stepping into the place where he was to dance, announced that he would dance two nights and two days. Before stopping at the end of the two nights and two days he announced that he had seen three Cree. He tied three feathers to the pole and said they would kill three Cree.

Having finished the dance he led out a war party. They slept five times. They saw three Cree. They brought home the scalps of these Cree and had a big dance in celebration. This man was a cousin of mine.

14. A man said he was going to perform the sun dance, having been directed in a dream to do so. He invited all of the men. They procured the pole, put up the tipi, and made all preparations. When about to begin he passed the pipe around, asking if some of them wished to participate. One of the young men said he wished to join him. took the pipe, smoked it, and passed it on. Another said he would participate, and then a third volunteered. They began preparations, all of them painting

their legs gray and their bodies red. The leader walked out of the tipi, announcing that he would dance two days.

They danced all night and the following morning. At noon he announced that there would be great excitement among them in the camp. There would be no Cree but the trouble would originate among themselves. He could not understand clearly but said he might see it more clearly next time, before the dance was over, as the event was to take place before the completion of the dance. He then finished his smoke. They danced all that night and until noon on the following day, when he stopped for a smoke. He said the excitement would occur in a short while and before they stopped dancing. He saw the spirits of dead buffalo, and, in their midst, a man. They resumed the dance and continued it throughout the afternoon. A little while before they stopped a large herd of buffalo came. All of the young men mounted horses and started in pursuit of the herd. One man was riding a wild horse. As he mounted, it reared and ran with him, throwing the man. As he fell to the ground his gun was discharged into his left side, killing him. When the dance was finished the leader announced that he was very sorry this sad accident had occurred before the dance was finished, but it could not be avoided. He had been anxious to finish the performance and said he was glad that it was completed. He thanked the men who had sung for him, saying this was all he would do, and stepped from his place. All that he said would happen did happen.

15. A man had a dream in which the thunders told him to make the sun dance. He intended to comply. Next day he announced his dream, saying he was going to perform the sun dance the following day and wished the young men to assemble at his tipi that evening. The next night he had another dream in which the sun came up clear in the morning, but toward noon the clouds gathered and there was a shower of rain and a thunderstorm. Though the sun was shining brightly he saw other portents in it. During the thunderstorm he saw a man among the thunders. Next morning he announced what he had seen in the dream, saying that the sun came up clear in the morning, it became cloudy, and there was a small shower and a thunderstorm; this lasted but a short while and during it he saw a man among the thunders. He supposed some one was to make the sun dance that year and this person knew it but was postponing it too long; if he did not perform it some misfortune would befall him. However he was not sure of the meaning of the portent and sent an old medicineman about the camp to ask every young and middle-aged man if he had been told in a dream to perform the sun dance.

Not being able to learn of any such person, they supposed he had postponed the performance too long and now was reluctant to carry it out. Early next morning, before sunrise, they prepared the pole and he made a small bowl of birchbark, bidding them mix water and red earth in it, place this before the stone, and put the pipe by it.

He began the dance. The sun rose clear on a beautiful bright morning. Toward noon some light clouds gathered. While taking the second smoke he announced that a man had been told to perform the sun dance, had not obeyed, and the thunders were coming for him. He had seen this person up among the thunders, but it was now too late to give him warning and the thunders would kill him. After the second smoke he resumed the dance. Soon there was a little shower of rain. The lightning struck somewhere off among the tipis. The people near this tipi were heard weeping. The thunders had killed a young man sitting in the tipi eating his meal. When the dance was over the performer announced that the thunders had told the man that he well knew he was to perform the sun dance; they had directed him in a dream to join the performer, but the man had told his dream to no one. They had decided to kill him to show the people what they would do when their directions were not heeded. He told them he was thankful that he himself was not the man who had been killed, and was glad he had finished the sun dance.

He invited all the young children and the women to drink of the water in the birchbark bowl. Each drank of it and consumed all of it. He had then finished what he wished to do. It had happened just as had been revealed to him in the dream. He had not understood the portent of the first dream. Everything happens as it is seen in a dream and announced by the dreamer.

This is what happened to the man who disobeyed.

The people put up the pole, arranged the pipe and a stone painted blue, and a man began the sun dance in the morning. All who perform the sun dance have been told by the man in the east to do so and the thunders in a dream give them warning when the appointed time has come. They then hold the dance.

About noon, when he had had the second smoke, he announced that something would happen a little while later; he did not know exactly what this would be, but it would involve some excitement; he would tell them more at the third smoke—for a performer may not speak between the smokes. If it did not happen before that time he might be able to give them details after the third smoke. Having finished

the second smoke he resumed the dance. Before the third smoke a man in the camp had quarrelled with his wife and had beaten her. The husband then arranged himself (it is the custom for all to paint their faces while the dance is on) and went to the performance. A little while after his appearance there the leader saw a number of women running to the man's tipi, weeping, amid great excitement. When the men arrived at the place they found the women had reached there ahead of them. A rope had been thrown over the top poles of the tipi and anchored at one end to a stake. The man's wife had removed the anchor rope, fastened it in this manner, then climbed the poles, put her neck in a noose, and hung herself. While swinging from it over the fire her clothing caught fire. This was the excitement referred to by the performer. Previously he had not been able to grasp the meaning of what he had seen and had intended to explain it at the third smoke, but, in the meanwhile, the event had happened. If she had delayed a while he would have warned the men of her intention and they could have prevented the suicide. In every sun dance the leader sees and foretells something, for he is a medicine-man. The men who perform the sun dance know that it is difficult, but they desire long life, know they are destined to become medicinemen, and perform it because they wish to help others—those who are sick as well as those who go out to fight.

16. Before he was born a young man had been told by the man in the east to perform the sun dance. After he was born, the thunders in the west told him he was to perform a sun dance. When ready to perform it he told his father he was going to hold the sun dance and would then go out to fight the Cree. If he went out to fight and would hold the dance before each war party, he would kill a number of Cree. They procured the pole, brought to it the stone and the pipe; also, a white and a red cloth on each of which dots were painted. These they hung about the middle of the pole. He began the dance, saying he would dance four days. As the sun rose the singers began, and the man started the dance. He continued it four days and four nights, neither eating nor drinking. He smoked four times each day and four times each night. Now and then he chewed a certain root which he had procured for this purpose.

Six men participated in the dance, and all of these were to be in the war party. Four other men prepared the ground. On the second day, while he was sitting and smoking, he announced to the onlookers that if what the thunders had said were true, on the cloths which he had caused to be placed on the pole he had seen the faces of many Cree, and they

would overcome the Cree every time they went out to fight them. He resumed the dance, stopping a little while after sunset on the fourth day. To the onlookers his abdomen seemed to lie flat against his spine, so wasted was he, yet the dancers seemed to be stronger than when they began the dance. A few days later, when they had satisfied their appetites, they went out to fight, returning with the scalps of all the Cree they had seen. Every time after this that the man went out to fight he returned with as many scalps as he could carry.

17. One time a man was told by the thunders in a dream to perform the sun dance. He selected four men to get a small oak tree. They procured one and brought it to the ground. They cleared a space of ground in the bush and over this erected a large tipi. They put up the pole. About the ground, in the form of a circle, they placed on end limbs about five feet in height, and about six inches in diameter. When all was ready they dug a hole, painted the stone the same color as the pole, and put the stone at the bottom of this hole (which was about three feet deep), the pole resting on top of the stone. The stone was placed at the base of the pole that the pole might remain there a very long time. The pipe was placed in front of the pole. The performer came out of his tipi. Before stepping on the place where he was to stand during the dance he announced that he would dance four nights and four days. He asked them to get a small buffalo hide and a small pot; to paint these blue and hang them about the middle of the pole. The pot he gave to the dogs and the hide to the moon, praying them to give him strength. When these had been arranged he announced that he would dance four nights and four days. Early in the evening he took his position on the spot where he was to stand. They began to sing and beat the drum. He danced all night. Next day at noon he rested and smoked. While smoking he announced that something would happen; there would be some excitement in the camp before he had finished the dance. He said he did not quite understand its nature as he could not see it clearly, but would explain it to them as soon as he understood what he had seen. He danced that afternoon and the following night. The second day, at noon, when he sat down to smoke, he said he had seen the Cree, and bade the men keep a sharp look-out, saying that two or three men should go to a place which he designated and there await the Cree.

He danced all of the ensuing night. Next day, the third day, at noon, he warned them that every Dakota should be watchful, saying the Cree were coming close and might encounter them at any time. He resumed the dance and danced throughout the night. The fourth day, at

noon, while smoking (he smoked four times daily), he said the Cree would come a little while before sunset; all of the women were to remain in the tipis and under no circumstances leave the camp. He had seen the Cree killing the women and all of them must remain in the camp.

A little while before sunset a woman went out for wood and was killed by the Cree. All this while the men were under arms and the Cree had not proceeded far before the Dakota had procured the scalps of all of them. The old men who had not gone to fight did the singing for the performer. It was nearly sunset when the Cree arrived and he had not long to dance after the young men left to pursue the Cree. That was the excitement which the performer had foretold.

There follows a long narrative of the many exploits of a famous sun dancer which are given in full as an illustration of shamanistic activities.

18. Before birth people are told in the east to make the sun dance. The person in the east told the thunders that men were to perform the sun dance. After birth people are told by the thunders in a dream that they are to perform the sun dance. On the following morning one who has been so directed will announce his dream to the young men of the camp. They go out into the bush and cut a small oak tree which they make ready for use. After planting this as a pole they place a stone close by, also a pipe with the stem pointing toward the pole. The singers then prepare the drum.

a

One man, whom the informant saw perform the sun dance, erected a tipi close to the pole. He procured a buffalo skull and prepared it for use. The skin of this man was perforated by a small sharp knife under each shoulder and skewers thrust through these slits. On each side of the pierced flesh and close to it, thongs were tied to the skewers. A thong on one side was tied to one buffalo horn, that from the other side was tied to the other horn.

When all was ready, the performer came out of the tipi weeping, dragging the buffalo head behind him by means of the thongs in his flesh, and went around the pole stopping behind the stone at the place where he was to stand. He removed the thongs and placed the buffalo skull in front of the stone. A slit was made in his flesh above the sternum as had been done below the shoulders. A long thong was tied to a stick, inserted through the cut flesh, the other end of the thong being tied to the pole. This was done before sunrise. He announced that he would finish the

dance a little while after sunset. As the sun appeared he began the dance. He continued it all day, taking neither food nor drink, but stopping four times to smoke. All day he continued the dance. A little after sunset he stopped. When he had finished he announced that he was glad it was finished, thanked all of those who had assisted him, and said he had been told by the person in the east to make the dance after being born. Having said this the person in the east turned him over to the thunders in the west, saying to them, as he did so, that he had told the man to perform the sun dance after being born on earth. To this the thunders consented, saying they would tell the medicineman when the time had come to perform it. After being born he was told one night by the thunders to perform it. The following morning he had announced his dream. He concluded by repeating that he was glad it was finished. Each man when told by the thunders to perform it is given the colors which he is to use.

The next dance was in 1901, at Portage La Prairie, Manitoba. About fifty years ago the cutting of the flesh was stopped.

The singing is accompanied by the blowing of a whistle made from the wing bone of the wild goose and used by the performer, and also by the drum which is beaten by the singers. The use of the buffalo skull is not a universal feature.

The men are willing to assist one who announces his intention of performing the sun dance for they know he will be killed by the thunders if he does not perform it.

b

This man performed the dance a second time. One day people were heard to say he was going to perform it again. The four men who had prepared things before procured the same pole, stone, and buffalo head.

They painted the pole with blue earth and put blue stripes on the face of the buffalo skull. The performer walked out of the tipi to the place where he was to stand. Before stepping into his position he announced that he would dance one day. As the sun rose he began the dance, continuing it throughout the day and until sunset. His flesh was cut in a new place over the sternum, a stick inserted, and to this was tied a string about the size of a small fishing line. He stated that he would smoke four times during the dance; at the second smoke he would see something but was not sure what this would be; however, he would give them detailed information when the time had come for him to smoke. When he had smoked the second time he told the young men they were to go out to a certain place and look about carefully for something was coming to see him perform the dance.

He continued the dance all morning. After he had smoked the second time the men kept a careful look-out. When he had resumed the dance after the second smoke, the men announced that a party of Cree were nearby on their return home. All of the Dakota were excited. A number of young men were assisting with the singing. When the Cree were sighted the Dakota had to go in pursuit of them. Some of the older men offered to take their place and thus release all of the young men to go after the Cree, except such as were to remain behind to protect the camp. They procured the scalps of four Cree. A little after sunset he said he was pleased to have again finished the sun dance. The Dakota then made him a leader because he had told them the Cree were coming and had done so even when he himself was not going out to fight.

c

This man performed a third dance. He announced he would perform another sun dance. He took a sweatbath. During the sweatbath he said he was going to perform the sun dance, but would first fight the Cree; after his return he would hold the dance; it would last four days. After taking the sweatbath he went out on a war party. Upon his return he directed the four assistants to procure the pole and make things ready for the dance. When all was ready he prepared himself in the tipi by cutting the flesh below the cuts made previously at the back of his shoulders, and attached the buffalo skull as previously. When all was ready he stepped out of the tipi and walked around the pole, saying that he was going to perform the sun dance again; he had before that finished it, but the thunders had again directed him to perform it. He inquired whether any of the young men present would like to take part; no one was willing to join him because four days and four nights was too long a period. Medicinemen, however, have power to go this long without food or drink. Others who are not directed in a dream cannot endure it more than a day and a night. The flesh was cut over the sternum and he was again tied to the pole. He began the dance. Throughout the performance he leaned back against the string keeping it taut.

He continued the dance all night and throughout the first day, the second night, and the second day; the third night and the third day; also the fourth night. On the morning of the fourth day he said that was the last day and asked the singers to stop four times during the day to allow him to sit down and smoke. (A performer must ask the singers to stop if he wishes a respite). A little after sunset, he said, he would stop. On the fourth day the singers stopped, saying they would allow him to rest. Accordingly he rested. Four times during the day he

stopped to rest. It seemed as though his stomach lay flat upon his spine—so thin was he. A little while after sunset he stopped. Two of the singers went to him and supported him, while another untied the string fastening him to the pole. They took him into the tipi, giving him food and water. When he had eaten he announced that he was going out on another war party and that they would sleep ten nights on the journey before reaching the Cree and starting home. Four days hence they were to start. During four nights he sang war songs. On the fourth day they started.

They traveled ten nights before reaching the Cree, of whom they killed five families. When they returned they were received with rejoicings and a big war dance was held. That is what this man accomplished on the war party which he led after finishing the dance. He was a powerful medicineman. The scalps which they brought home were stretched across two hoops made for this purpose. A cross (+) was painted on each scalp.

d

This man, who had now performed the sun dance three times, was again directed by the thunders to perform it. One morning he invited the young men to his tipi, saying he had an announcement to make to them. He bade them eat first, saying he would make the announcement when they had finished their meal.

When all had finished, he told them he had completed all the sun dances as they were assigned to him, but in a later dream the thunders had again directed him to perform the sun dance.

He asked the men to procure him a buffalo skull. All went to hunt a buffalo skull that would serve in the place of the one he had previously used. They planted the pole, placed the stone and the pipe in position, and, at the place where the man was to stand, drove into the ground two sticks about four inches square at the top, with the top about an inch and a half above the ground. The man said he would stand on them during the dance. That evening when all was made ready and the flesh was incised below each shoulder, he stepped into his place and told the men that the buffalo had come to him in a dream, saying he wished to be in the sun dance every time this man performed it; that he was made by *wakantanka* before any other animal was made, and that he has more power and strength than any other animal. For that reason he wished to be in every sun dance, for it was celebrated that one might obtain strength and power, and he could impart strength and power to complete the dance. The man said that this time, too, he would dance four days and four nights. He began the dance.

In the morning he went into his tipi, painted the buffalo skull blue, and tied a string to each horn, fastening one to one shoulder, and the other to the other shoulder. He walked out of the tipi and around the pole, dragging the buffalo skull behind him. When he had completed the circuit and arrived at the two sticks on which he was to stand he untied the strings, attached to the back of his shoulders, laid the buffalo skull at the foot of the pole, and stepped upon the two sticks where he was to stand during the dance. As he did so, the singers gave the war whoop and started the song.

In the camp there was always someone willing to perform the sun dance when another was celebrating it; but when this man asked if any one would join him there was not a response, for what he performed was difficult for other men to endure. He danced four nights and four days. When about to sit down to have a smoke he would remove the string which was tied to his flesh above the sternum. Having finished the dance he made a sweatbath; when he came out of this they gave him food. Always, when stopping the dance, either for an intermission or upon its completion, he would make a smudge of sweetgrass and over it hold whatever he was about to eat, drink, or smoke.

Having finished the meal he smoked his pipe. All the assistants were present. He told them that whenever he was to be sent out to fight he was told to make the sun dance, so that all the men he took with him would have power to kill Cree. The thunders told him that after finishing the sun dance he was to go out on another war party, and that this was why he was to perform it. He bade the men prepare moccasins and food for the approaching war party. When all were ready, they started. While eating the midday meal the leader, feeling drowsy, lay down to sleep while the others ate. Rising after his nap, he announced that they were to kill and eat a bear that night. In the afternoon they resumed the journey. When they had camped for the night and were eating the evening meal, a bear approached. They killed it and removed the hide, eating some of the flesh and keeping some for the rest of the journey.

Early on the following morning they started away. At noon the man slept again. When he awoke he told them that when they had camped for the night they would kill two geese, a male and a female, and were to eat them. Each night he sang the war songs. The second night, after singing these, he announced that on the following day, while on the journey, they would kill an elk and were to eat it for supper. Next morning they resumed the journey, killed an elk and ate it for the

evening meal. The third night while they were eating the elk at the evening meal, the man sang the fighting songs and then announced that on the following day, while traveling, they would kill a moose and were to eat it at the evening meal. When they had finished eating, he sang again. Next day, during the journey, they killed a moose. This was the second moose they had killed. They ate it during the evening meal. After supper the man sang again. Next day they were to kill an otter and have it for the evening meal. That night would be the last one they would spend before reaching their destination. The medicineman told them they were to dry the hide of the otter which they had killed, and were to fasten to it all the scalps which they took. After the otter was killed, and the party had camped for the night, the leader sang. When he had stopped he announced that there would be five Cree out hunting; he would give them two moose to take home; they should fill themselves with moose meat and early next morning the Dakota would kill the satiated Cree. Next morning the Cree went out to hunt. They returned to the camp and the Dakota party went to it early next day about sunrise. They encountered the Cree and had a severe fight, killing five of the enemy and bringing back their scalps, tied to the otter hide. When they had returned to the camp they held the war dance. After every sun dance this man did something remarkable. Stories are told about this man frequently because he was powerful in every way. He was granted a long life because of the severity of his performance.

e

One time he invited an old man to his tipi. When the old man had come he told him he had had a dream in which he was directed to perform the sun dance. The thunders had bade him perform it. They had now waited a little while longer than was fitting and wished him to perform it at once. He made the old man a present of a blanket and gave him a meal, asking him to invite all the young men and announce to them the host's dream. The old man, having finished the meal, picked up the blanket, went out of the tipi, and walked around the entire camp, calling out that this man was going to perform the sun dance and wished every young man in the camp to help him. They went to his tipi. That night he had a dream in which there was a big thunderstorm, and the lightning struck one of the poles of the tipi above his head; the thunders told him he had waited too long and they wished him to perform the sun dance at once.

To all the men gathered at his tipi he gave a meal, asking them to get the pole and hunt for an old buffalo skull that he might use. Some

went to look for the buffalo skull while others went to get the pole. They found a buffalo skull and brought it to the grounds, and the pole was planted. The buffalo skull was painted blue and placed near the foot of the pole; the stone was painted blue and placed by the pole, while the pipe was laid close by. He bade them make incisions in his shoulders and his breast and fasten the string to his breast. He danced that night. Before starting to dance he told those present that he wished to rest before sunrise.

Next morning before sunrise he stopped and announced that when the dance was over a herd of buffalo would come to the camp and that all should get as many as possible. Before the singers began the song he said they should sing one more song, then rest, and later resume the singing. To the slit made over each shoulder he tied feathers, and fastened to the pole the string tied to his breast, announcing that he would continue the dance until the string tore out the flesh, as he had previously been told to dance until he tore out the flesh. The men who had cut the flesh did not make deep cuts but left only a thin strip of flesh to hold the string, so that it would tear easily. He continued the dance all day and just before sunset tore out the flesh and fell backward on the ground. As he fell, all of those present gave the war whoop. Two men lifted him up and helped him to sit erect. He told them the performance was now over and on the morrow they would see a big herd of buffalo. He took a sweatbath, then went into his tipi and dressed. The assistants gave him food and water. All were up next morning before sunrise, for the man had told them that they would see a big herd of buffalo when they got up. One man went out and brought back word that a big herd was close to the camp. All went out to kill buffalo.

f

This man again invited the old man, giving him a meal and telling him he had had a dream in which he was instructed to perform the sun dance, the thunders having so commanded him. He said he had invited the old man to announce this to the young men, and presented him with a blanket. Having finished the meal, the old man summoned all the young men in the camp and announced to them that this man was going to perform the sun dance and wished all of them to come to his tipi. When the old man had returned to the man's tipi all of those who had been invited assembled there. He bade some of them hunt a buffalo skull for him while others prepared the tipi. When the skull had been brought, and all was ready, he bade them cut the flesh between the shoulder blades and tie the buffalo skull to the flesh at that place. That

night he performed the dance in the tipi instead of at the pole. Early next morning before sunrise he smoked. The pole was erected, the ground prepared, and the stone was moved to it. They began the singing as he walked out of the tipi dragging the buffalo skull from the flesh between the shoulders. A slit was made in the flesh over the sternum and he was tied by means of it to the pole. He announced that if he did not tear out the flesh that day, he would dance all day and night and continue it until the fourth day, and until the fifth if the flesh had not torn out. He began the dance. He did not tear out the flesh that day and continued the dance all day. He continued all night and next day until the third night. He danced through the third day and on through the night. (The night, in a way, does not count, for the flesh is never torn out during the night.) He danced all that night and the fourth day, without tearing out the flesh, and without exhibiting any signs of fatigue or exhaustion. He danced all that night and the fifth day. About the middle of the fifth day the flesh tore out. All this while he had taken neither water nor food, though he had stopped to smoke whenever he wished. As he tore out the flesh all those present gave the war whoop. All were glad he had finished the dance.

The tearing out of the flesh is a sign that a subsequent war party will kill all the Cree they encounter, wherefore all give the war whoop as the flesh is torn out. The men lifted him and carried him into the tipi. He took a sweatbath, dressed, went into his tipi and ate and smoked. He bade the men be ready as soon as possible, as he was going to fight as soon as they were ready. When all were ready the party started.

On the fourth day out they encountered the Cree. There was a severe fight. They killed four of the Cree and brought home their scalps. A big war dance was held. When the dance was over, all those in the camp, both men and women, shook hands with the leader of the party, for all were pleased by his feats. He lived a number of years.

Now and then the war dance was celebrated, thanks to him, for every time he went on a war party he returned with scalps.

g

Previous to the last fifty years I saw many sun dances and heard of many more. This is another story about the same man. One time he invited an old man, gave him food and tobacco, and asked him to invite the men, for he wished to perform the sun dance. All of the young men who heard about it were willing to come and assist.

When all had come he and they took the sweatbath. While in the sweatbath tipi he asked whether anyone present would like to take part

in the dance. None of the young men would volunteer, for it was his custom to cut the flesh, and tie himself with a string to the pole, and they could not endure such things. He added that if anyone wished to join him, it would not be necessary for that one to do the things he was doing; all they would need to do was paint themselves and dance. He was not going to do anything else; he was going out to fight and he wished more power that they might overcome the Cree. He passed the pipe around.

One of the young men said he would help the man, lit the pipe, and smoked it. Another said he would join, and smoked the pipe; so four young men in all, offered to join him. He said he would obtain for them power to stand so long as he danced. These four prepared themselves while some went to get the buffalo skull and others went for the pole. He told them that this time he would have a tipi around and over the pole; the first night they were to dance in his tipi where they were now preparing, and next morning would go into the tipi erected over the pole. The first night he danced in the tipi. In the morning, before sunrise, they brought the buffalo skull and tied the string attached to it to the flesh of his back. He danced thus in the large tipi erected over the pole. They made a small mound of earth about a foot high for him. On this he stood, two of the young men participating being on one side, the other two on the other side.

When he tied the buffalo skull to the flesh of his back, dragged it, and danced, it was a sign he would go out to fight after completing the dance. Before sunrise they fixed the ground and prepared two buffalo calf hides, painting one blue and one red. He gave the red one to the sun and the blue one to the moon, asking the sun and the moon to give power to him and to the young men participating, so that they might endure the dance as long as he and not suffer. He then went outside, dragging the buffalo skull. There, before starting the dance for the day, he smoked. Before beginning the dance he asked the men to untie the buffalo skull and place it at the foot of the pole. He said he would dance until the flesh tore from his breast. He told the singers that the other four men were not to do anything except dance as they were; he alone would tie a string to the flesh.

He stepped upon the small mound of earth. The singers started the song and he began the sun dance. They continued it all that day. The leader had said that the others were to rest four times each day until he tore out the flesh; at night, when he stopped for the third smoke, they might rest and sleep until daylight. He, however, could endure it

day and night. He danced all day and all night. At the third smoke, during the night, the young men stopped, resuming the dance next morning as the sun rose.

They danced all the first day, resting four times, and, similarly, the second day. During the second day the parents (fathers ?) of the four men gave away many things to the poor, saying they were pleased that their sons were enduring the dance so well. They danced all that night until the third smoke. They danced throughout the third day and until the third smoke of the ensuing night, resuming it on the fourth day. He did not tear the flesh the fourth day.

Throughout the performance all of the devotees kept in their mouth a root which they chewed to allay hunger and thirst and to keep their thoughts away from food. They continued the dance until night. At the third smoke the young men stopped and rested until morning. They danced all of the next day. Before noon the stomachs of the four young men were stuck to their spinal columns,¹ so empty were they. Even so, all had strength. They danced throughout the fifth day, the man tearing out the flesh a little while after sunset. As he did so, he fell back prostrate instead of into a sitting posture, as he should have done. All gave the war whoop. Two of the singers ran to him, raised him into a sitting posture and gave him a smoke.

They carried the other four men from their places and set them by this man. All smoked. Before the beginning of the dance the assistants had procured a hard stiff hide which they cut out into the shape of a horse, making a perforation near the back of it and tying it by means of this hole with a thong to the wrist of the leader.

When the men had finished smoking, the assistants made ready the sweatbath tipi. When this was over they went into the big tipi and had food. Having finished the meal, they smoked. The leader bade one of the devotees come and remove the image of the horse, lift the stone, and place the image of the horse under it.

When this was done the leader said he wished to go out and bring back every horse the Cree had; for this reason he had worn the image of a horse. He bade the men get ready their guns and arrows, and two or three extra pairs of moccasins, saying they would go four days hence. On the fourth day they started. The third day out, two men who had been sent ahead, returned, saying they had sighted the Cree camp. The others sat in the bushes while the scouts counted the tipis and ascertained

¹A literal translation of the Dakota expression.

the number of horses there. The scouts returned, giving the number of horses and tipis. The leader said he did not want any of the Cree but did want all their horses and was going to the camp when all were asleep. I do not know whether it was because the man had put the image of the horse under the stone, but all the horses were away from the camp, untied, dragging their tethers with them. That night they secured every horse they could find and started back home. They returned with a large number of horses. All were glad to see the man return with the horses. They did not bring back any scalps, but even so they held the war dance just as though scalps had been brought.

h

Another time this man said he was going to perform the sun dance. He procured the four men who had helped him before and also other assistants. The others arranged the tipi while these four arranged the ground, erected the pole, put by it the stone and the pipe, and had all in readiness. The tipi was above and around the pole. On all the previous occasions when he had performed the dance, the day was clear, the sun shining. He announced that it would rain a little on this occasion; when the rain came they were to remove the tipi, as he wished to be washed by the thunders. When the tipi was ready he sent men to get another buffalo skull. This they procured and painted blue. The tipi was pegged down securely for the young men understood from his words that a big thunderstorm was approaching. The buffalo skull having been procured and everything arranged, he bade them have the tipi ready by morning, saying he was going to dance in the smaller tipi where they were to build a small mound of earth on which he would stand. He would go out into the big tipi next day, a little while before sunrise. He danced all night in the smaller tipi. He told them to put two small stones before the pole. About daylight they moved out the ceremonial objects and he rested for a smoke. He bade them fasten to the flesh of his back the string attached to the buffalo skull. As the sun appeared he walked out of the tipi and encircled the entire ceremonial ground. Having completed the circuit, and being about to step upon the two stones,—which had been painted blue—he announced that he wished the string, attached to the buffalo skull, removed from his back and tied, one end to the pole, the other to his breast, saying he would dance until he tore out the flesh. Before stepping upon these two stones he announced that he had had intercourse with a woman a few days before; the rain would wash him and thus the thunders would remove the impurity. As he stepped on the two stones the sun rose clear. In a little

while it became cloudy and before ten songs were sung it was raining. By noon the rain was over. He danced all day, resting four times to smoke; all night, and rested before sunrise. He danced the second day and the third night. He danced all of the third day and all of the fourth night. The fourth day, as the sun rose he tore out the flesh and fell backward. The men present gave the war whoop; two of them lifted him into a sitting posture and gave him a smoke. He had painted his legs gray between the ankles and the knees. When he had taken the sweat-bath and had eaten, he smoked. He then said that he had painted his legs gray because he wished to go out to fight the Cree during the winter but not sooner. He bade the men be none of them impatient for the arrival of winter. I never heard any more about this performance. He was a great medicineman and I suppose he went out to fight.

i

One day an old man came to the camp crying out that the man who made the sun dance continually was going to perform another and wished all the young men to gather at his tipi to see what the man might wish them to do.

When all the young men had assembled at his tipi, he told them that every time he completed a sun dance he thought he had finished all that the thunders desired him to do; it appeared to him that he was the only man whom the thunders were after continually. He would not remonstrate, however, because his power was derived from them and he was pleased every time he was told to perform the sun dance, because he procured assistance from them when on the war party; still, he was sorry to trouble the young men. If, however, they did not object, he would be pleased to have their assistance. He gave all of them a meal. When they had eaten he bade some procure a buffalo skull while others arranged the tipi. Accordingly, some procured the buffalo skull while others prepared the tipi. The tipi was always about thirty yards from the pole and faced east, as he wished the sun to see him come out. He always walked out as the sun was rising. He bade them procure two hides, one of which they were to paint red, for the sun, the other, blue, for the moon. When all was ready he asked them to dig two holes in the ground for his feet, about six inches deep and the shape of a foot. When that was done, *hopa'wakan* (*Wakan* wind) (for that was the name of the man, a name he had bestowed upon himself when he performed the first sun dance, saying that the thunders could go around many days without eating or drinking, and he was assuming this name so that he might endure many days without eating or drinking) took the sweatbath,

inviting all of the men to participate with him. Some of them accepted the invitation. He filled a pipe and passed it around, saying that those who were willing to join him in the dance should light it and smoke it. One man said he would join him, lighted the pipe, and smoked it; another one volunteered and smoked the pipe; then another and another until six had volunteered. These six were then painted.

The first night he danced in the tipi. Early in the morning he stopped to rest, saying he would give the others a rest. They slept awhile and returned to the tipi when the day gave signs of breaking. He bade them all make ready. All prepared themselves. He asked them to cut the flesh below his shoulders and attach the buffalo skull to these parts. They did so. He walked out of the tipi, dragging the buffalo skull, the others following. He walked around the ceremonial tipi. Before stepping into the holes dug for his feet he announced that he would dance until he broke the string; the other men were not to copy his example, but dance as they were; he would rest four times during the day in order to allow the others to rest; likewise, at night; he would dance until he broke the string; this time he would not tear the flesh. Before stepping into position he said that the person who had sent him down to earth had told him he was going to send him down to earth and that he would be firmly planted there. With that assurance he was sent down. He said that his name before he was born was Hopa'wakan, wherefore he could go for days without eating or drinking. Neither the thunders nor any gods upon earth had given him power; one alone had made everything on the earth and he it was who had given him power to perform all these feats. To that *wakan* being alone he was looking when he performed these dances. Tearing out the flesh was not so difficult as breaking the string and he was going to look to that power which had made everything on earth; by virtue of this he would be able to break the string.

Having said this, he added that he was glad more men were assisting him this time. He would see to it that these six men procured help from that same being on whom he was depending. He then stepped into the holes which had been dug for his feet, the men standing, three on each side of him. The singer began and they started the dance. They continued the dance all day, stopping only to smoke. During the night they stopped four times to smoke. The second day passed without the string breaking, also the third night. The third day passed without the string breaking. Meanwhile the parents of the six participants were giving presents to the poor, telling them they were glad their sons had

continued until the third day without difficulty. The fourth day passed without the string breaking, and they continued the dance on the fifth day. On the fifth day, just as the sun passed the meridian, one of the six participants fell.

The leader had given them medicine to prevent their thoughts dwelling on food or water. As the man fell, the singers stopped. The medicineman knew why this man had fallen, but did not speak until after the dance. When the dance was over he told the men sitting by him that this young man had fallen because less than four days prior to the dance he had had intercourse with a woman; he was sorry to announce that the transgressor would die before the summer was over, adding that any man who was well enough aware that he had had intercourse with a woman during the previous four days should not participate in the sun dance. It was now past noon. The leader bade the fallen man sit where he had fallen and he with the other five continued the dance. Thus they continued through the night.

- Early the sixth morning the leader bade the fallen man go to the tipi and sit there quietly. The leader and the others continued the dance through the sixth day and the following night. At noon, on the seventh day, the string broke. Six and a half days they had danced without food or drink.

After the string had broken the leader smoked. They carried the other men from their places, put them in a sitting posture, and permitted them to smoke. They arranged a sweatbath tipi and all the performers took a sweatbath. When they had finished the sweatbath they took food. When the meal was over, the leader told them he would lead out a war party four days hence, and they should prepare for the same.

Four days later they started. On the fourth day out, as the sun was rising, the leader selected two of the best men, telling them to go ahead and find out the number of Cree tipis. They were to go straight ahead until they came to a spruce tree in the top of which was a crow's nest. They went to the tree and, looking up at the top, assured themselves that it was the tree referred to. He had told them to go on a little way beyond this tree. The Cree were not far away and they were to be very careful after leaving the tree. They passed by the tree and out into the bush until they came to an open space in which were four tipis. They returned, telling the others what they had seen. When they told the leader they had found the tree described to them by him, he said he had seen the tree in a dream during the winter and wished to test his own

powers. When the scouting party reported to him that there were only four of the enemy tipis he directed the party to remain there the remainder of the day and the following night; on the fifth day as the sun was rising they would attack and kill the Cree. Early in the morning they spread out in a line and surrounded the tipis. As the sun was rising they rushed into the camp and killed all the Cree. The man who had fallen while performing the sun dance was killed. This was the occasion referred to when the leader said this man would die before the close of summer.

They returned with the scalps of all the Cree. All were pleased to see them return, yet some were sad over the fate of the man who had been killed, saying, this medicineman had gone out on many war parties and this was the first time a man in his party had been killed. All, however, rejoiced over the number of scalps that were brought home and they celebrated a big war dance.

j

One day the people heard that this man was going to perform the sun dance again. At this time some of the Dakota were in camp in the bush while out on a hunting expedition. When they heard that he was going to perform the sun dance they came in from every direction to see it. He invited the men who were to serve as assistants. When all had come, he gave them food. When they had eaten they took the sweatbath.

When the sweatbath was over he announced that there were two powers which would kill him if he did not make the sun dance; he would be killed by the thunders who would cause him to be sick a long time until he was very frail. If he became sick in this way no medicineman could effect a cure. He filled a pipe and passed it around, asking if anyone would take part in the dance. No one felt disposed to join him. He told them he would dance ten nights and ten days this time. He bade them get a pole and a buffalo skull to put at the base of it, and to get a stone also. They procured all of these and erected the pole.

He bade them make incisions on his shoulders wherein feathers might be inserted; to make a hoop, and tie to it the soft downy white feathers of the wild goose. They made the incisions on his shoulders and to these incisions tied the hoop instead of, as formerly, the buffalo skull. That evening when all preparations had been made the singers started the song in the small tipi in which the performer had gotten ready. He danced all that night. Early next morning he rested a while. A little while before sunrise he took a buffalo skull, and held this, the

stone, and the pipe over a sweetgrass smudge. Again, that morning, he asked if any of the young men wished to join him. No one cared to do so as he always danced too long for them. He wore a shirt pendent from his waist and hanging down to his knees, being otherwise naked. He danced that day and the following night. About midnight of the second night, the singers stopped and asked the man if he wished to rest during the night. He said he did not wish to rest and bade them continue. He told the singers they might rest and let others have their places on any of the occasions of his smoking. He danced all of the following day and night until nearly dawn, when he stopped for a rest: the night of this second day he stopped to rest.

He continued throughout the ten days and nights, dancing all day, stopping four times to smoke during the day, and before daylight each night. Thus he danced until the ten days' period had expired. He did not become tired but seemed to be gaining strength toward the end of this time. All of the singers, old and young, were exhausted. Dakota from other encampments came to see him complete the ten days and nights, for this was long a period. A little while after sunset, at the end of the ten nights and ten days he stopped. The *wakan* beings who had directed him to perform these dances promised him a long life if he would perform the sun dance, and he wished to live to an old age. For this reason he did all that they asked him to do. He said he was glad he had finished; he knew he would have to continue the dance that number of days and was not disposed to do so, but knowing it would secure him long life he finished the allotted period; he was now glad to have completed it, thanked all of the singers, stepped out of the place where he had stood, and took the sweatbath.

The sweatbath finished, he made a smudge of sweetgrass, holding over it his food and tea. Having finished the meal he filled his pipe, held it over the smudge, and smoked. He said he would lead out a war party in a few days. It was then the new moon. He said there was enough time to prepare, but even so all should make themselves ready to start on the day after the full moon.

When the appointed day came they started. On the fourth day out they stopped to rest. The leader sent two men ahead to ascertain the whereabouts of the Cree, saying that if they performed the service well, the party would kill all the Cree; if they performed it ill, the Cree would defeat the Dakota.

The two men were then sent out to reconnoiter the Cree. They went to the camp of the Cree. There were no women but only men

present in the camp, this giving the impression that the Cree were preparing for a fight. They were then preparing the evening meal. The leader said they would spend the night where they had rested and would attack the Cree about sunrise on the following morning. At the designated time they killed all of the Cree—ten in number. The *wakan* beings, who had directed the leader to perform the dance, gave him the ten Cree. The leader said the *wakan* beings had given him a Cree for each day that he danced. They took the scalps to the camp and held a big war dance.

k

Again it was said that this man was going to perform the sun dance. He never made the sun dance twice during the same year. The performances were separated by intervals of from one to four years.

One day he went about the camp inviting the young men. He gave them a meal and took the sweatbath with them, telling some to procure a buffalo skull and to prepare the tipi and grounds. They brought the pole, fixed the grounds, and erected the pole; the buffalo skull also was brought. When all was ready the buffalo skull was painted blue. He bade them get a piece of stiff hide and cut out of it the outline of a horse, as this time he did not wish Cree, but their horses. He asked if some of the young men would help him. Five volunteered to take part. When all was ready he bade them make an incision in his back; they tied the buffalo skull to the cut flesh. He walked around the ground dragging the buffalo skull, the five participants following him. He stood on the place prepared for him, two of the performers on one side, three on the other. He danced the first night with the buffalo head tied to his back and continued thus the following day.

He danced all night and all day, all the following day and night, all the next day and night. On the third day, he bade them make a smudge of sweetgrass, take from his wrist the rawhide image of the horse, hold the same over the smudge, replace it on his wrist, and tie it there. He danced the following night and on the fourth day, a little after sunset, stopped. During this performance he did not tie himself to the pole but had the buffalo skull fastened to the flesh of his back. (When one of these was done the other was omitted.) He bade them take the image of the horse off his wrist, lift the stone at the base of the pole, and place the image under it. He said that ten days from that time he would go to the camp of the Cree and secure all their horses. When ten days had passed they started.

They journeyed until the fourth day when they sighted the Cree camp. The leader said they would remain there until night and during the night would steal all the horses of the Cree. Before night came he said that one of the men who had taken part in the *suñ* dance would procure a nice horse, white, with brown ears, having on its back a red cloth to which a goat's tail was sewed. To the man designated he said: "You are to take that horse and keep it."

When it had grown dark they started out to secure the horses, and returned to camp with them. They celebrated the war dance and had great festivities. The people were pleased every time this man led a war party. He was the subject of story after story because he was capable of performing extraordinary feats.

l

This man performed still another sun dance. The people said they had heard this man was going to perform another sun dance. He invited the men. From distant localities people came to see him perform the dance.

He bade the assistants bring the pole and took a sweatbath with them. He told them to dig holes in the ground for his feet and fasten him to the pole with thong. The first night he danced in the tipi. Early next morning he rested. Before sunrise he walked out of the tipi and announced that he was making the sun dance because he wished all to have a supply of meat; as a result of his performance, wherever they might go they would have plenty of wild cows, there would be many around them all the time. Having said this he asked them to fasten the thong to his flesh, adding, that when the flesh tore out he would bring the performance to an end. He then began the dance, continuing it all day and night. On the second day at noon he tore out the flesh and stopped.

He remarked that the man who had cut the flesh must have done it so that it would tear easily. He usually danced a long time; in fact, until the singers were fatigued. When he had finished and they had raised him to a sitting posture, and he had had his sweatbath, meal, and smoke, he announced that from that day on, so long as he lived, they would have plenty of cows (i.e., buffalo), no matter where they might go. For many years thereafter wherever the people happened to be they had plenty of wild cattle.¹

¹*p/Alewa'iwopi*, literally, 'small cows' (buffalo).

m

Another time this man was going to perform the sun dance. He invited the young men to his tipi. When they came he sent some to get the pole, and directed others to make ready the ground. He bade them procure a buffalo skull. That night, when all was ready, he announced that he would dance four nights and four days. He was not going to tie himself to the pole, but would have the buffalo skull tied to the flesh of his back. As always when using the buffalo skull, it did not rest on the ground but swung from the flesh about a foot and a half from the ground. He began the dance, continuing it throughout the night in the tipi, then walked out on the ground and danced until a little after sunset on the fourth day. He said to those present that he was glad he had finished it; when performing the previous sun dance he thought it was to be the last, but he had had another dream directing him to make the sun dance under penalty of being killed. He did not know why the thunders were so insistent, for he did all that they directed him to do; all that they told him was that if he failed to perform the dance he would be killed.

Two men lifted him into a sitting posture and lit the pipe. (This pipe must remain near the pole throughout the performance, the bowl being covered meanwhile with a piece of white cloth to prevent the tobacco from being blown away.) When he had finished the dance, had a smoke, a sweatbath, and something to eat, he announced that when the leaves were turning yellow he would lead a war party. He had, while dancing, seen only one Cree, yet at the time appointed he intended to go out to kill him. In the autumn, when the leaves were turning yellow, they went out to fight. They found only one Cree, a man out hunting. They brought back the scalp and celebrated the war dance.

n

This man had begun performing the sun dance while still a young man. He now announced that he would continue to perform it until he was a very old man and that that time had not yet come. Having said this, he told the young men to get the pole, make ready the ground and erect the tipi. When all was ready he directed them to get a buffalo skull, paint it blue, and place it at the base of the pole, as this time he was going to dance without cutting himself or carrying the buffalo skull. When they had painted the buffalo skull they placed it at the base of the pole, and, all being ready, he prepared to begin the dance. He announced that he would dance for a night and a day.

Accordingly, he danced that night and the following day. At noon he sat down to smoke. Having smoked, he announced that he had seen something during the dance which he could not understand, but might comprehend later. He continued the dance throughout that day. When he had nearly finished he again saw the omen, but still could not understand it. When he had finished the performance he took the sweatbath. Having finished the sweatbath he said to those gathered in his tipi to hear what he had seen during the dance (for always many gather for this purpose) that he had seen something which he could not understand, but believed it betokened something was coming to the camp.

He therefore urged the men to have their guns ready as this might be fulfilled at any time. That night he dreamed the Cree were coming to attack them. Next morning, he announced that the Cree were coming to attack them and all should be on their guard; that a *wakan* being had been trying to tell him a certain thing and all the other *wakan* beings had prevented his doing so—when he was on the point of giving the information the others stopped him. Four separate times he attempted to impart the information and as often was prevented from telling the man. This caused the man to feel badly over it for he knew at once why the other *wakan* beings were attempting to keep the information from him.

During the day some women went out to gather wood. The Cree pursued them into the camp. All the young men went out to resist the Cree. A young son of this man was among those who went out and was killed.

The man was angry and felt very badly over the death of his son. During the following night, the *wakan* being who had tried to tell him a certain thing came to him in a dream, telling him the other *wakan* beings had directed him to tell the man his son had been killed because the father did not perform the sun dance as he should have done at the last performance: they had directed him to dance with the buffalo skull tied to him or else to tie himself to the pole and dance four days. He had not done either. The other *wakan* beings were angry and wished to kill him instead of his son, but the thunders would not agree to this and they decided to kill the man's son. To this the other *wakan* beings agreed, and so the thunders substituted the man's son. This was the first time the man had disobeyed; and for not performing the dance as directed the misfortune of having his son killed was visited upon him.

o

About a year afterward this man was mourning for his son, unable to forget what had befallen him. He said that one of the Cree must die.

About a year after this he led out a war party. It included a large number of men, making the largest party he had led. The party started. The leader carried a stick slightly larger than a small pipestem.

The leader, feeling much grieved over the death of his son, held a *wo'atawaho'pi*, or fighting feast. All who came he bade announce to the other Dakota that he was going out to fight. He was angered by the death of his son and wished to kill every Cree whom he could find. Four days later men were to be seen coming into the camp from every direction.

The man carried with him the stick above mentioned and every now and then on the journey sang. While singing he became aware of the direction of the Cree and held the stick out in front of him. Having finished the song, he would make a notch on it, and after the next song another notch below the first one, and so on. When the notches reached almost to the bottom of the stick he sent out two men to see how many Cree were to be found. These men returned with the word that there was a large party of Cree. They did not specify the number of Cree tipis, declaring that they could not discover the exact number. The leader was so frenzied with anger toward the Cree that he could not contain himself.

He spent the night there. Early the following morning they marched directly into the camp of the Cree. Before getting to the camp, part of the men went to the right, part to the left, while part continued in two parallel columns straight through the middle of the camp until they reached the opposite side. Then they doubled back, the right line to the right side, the left line to the left. The detouring parties outside of the camp met and thus the camp was invested by both an outer and an inner circle of Dakota. They killed every Cree, procured the scalp of each and destroyed the entire camp. Not one of the Dakota received so much as a scratch from the encounter. They destroyed everything in the camp and brought home the scalps of all the wives of the Cree. Those at home were glad to see the war party return. Not a young middle-aged or able-bodied man was to be found in the camp for all had gone out on this war party, leaving only the women, children, and aged. This man performed the most remarkable feats ever achieved by any one. When the war party returned they held a big war dance.

(The stick which the leader had carried he left on the return journey at the foot of a tree.)

p

It was now about a year after the last war party. To a man who had come to visit him he said he was grieving for his son, complaining

that it was because of his omissions that his son had been killed. He had not made the sun dance on the previous occasion in the manner directed by the spirits, but had performed it otherwise; as a result of his disobedience all the *wakan* beings were angry with him. He must perform another sun dance and wished to perform it as he had performed the last one but was afraid to do so. He wished sometime to repeat the above-mentioned sun dance. The visitor replied that if the man wished to perform the dance at once he would assemble the men at his host's tipi. The host requested him to do so. The visitor walked out and invited all the old men to assemble at this man's tipi. The medicineman announced his dream to the assembled men, telling them his failure to perform the dance as directed and adding that he wished to repeat the performance.

When all was ready, the pole, stone, and pipe arranged, and a string attached to the pole ready for use in the morning, they put a white cloth on the pole as an offering to the sun, and a calf hide painted blue, as an offering to the moon. When about to begin the dance the performer asked if anyone present wished to participate. No one volunteered, for in every performance this man underwent too many hardships.

All being ready and no one volunteering to participate, he announced that he would have the buffalo skull fastened to the flesh at the back of his shoulders. They attached the buffalo skull to the flesh of his back and he danced all that night. Early the following morning he walked out of the tipi dragging the buffalo skull, made a circuit of the ceremonial ground, unfastened the buffalo skull, tied the string from the pole to his breast, and announced he was going to perform the sun dance for the sole purpose of enabling the people to obtain meat in abundance. He would dance until he broke the string. Having tied the string to the flesh he began the dance, continuing it until the third day and stopping four times each day to smoke. On the third day, when he had sat down to smoke, he told the men gathered about him to make a smudge of sweetgrass, saying that every creature on the earth was watching him while he danced and was pleased to see the performance. When the sun was about to set he tore out the flesh.

They prepared the sweatbath for him; he ate, and, having eaten, announced that a large number of animals had come to see him, and that as long as he lived the people would obtain plenty of meat. After that when the men went out to hunt they obtained plenty of game.

q

This man announced that he was going to make another sun dance. A friend invited all of the young men. All of them responded. After

they had eaten the meal which he had offered them and had taken the sweatbath, he inquired whether any of them wished to join him. Only one man expressed a desire to do so. This man announced a dream in which he had been told to join the host in performing the sun dance. These two inquired whether any one else would join them. As no one volunteered, they said they would do it together. They sent some to get two buffalo skulls and others to procure a pole. When the sweatbath was finished some went for the buffalo skulls, others prepared the ground and provided the pole. When the pole and the skulls had been brought, the first performer bade them make incisions in his back and attach the skull; they were to attach the other skull to the shoulders of the second performer. All being ready within the tipi, he walked out and bade them paint the stone blue and place it at the foot of the pole, putting his pipe also beside the pole. The man invited to join him placed nothing by the pole. A calf hide of the leader was painted blue, one of the second performer was painted red, and both were hung on the pole. He bade them drive two stakes into the ground. All was now ready for him when he should come out of the tipi on the following morning before sunrise. Before the singers began to sing he told them to stop a little while before sunrise.

They tied the buffalo skull to his back and fastened white feathers of the wild goose to the string, while eagle feathers were fastened to the string which attached the buffalo skull to the shoulders of the second performer. They danced all of that night. Early the following morning, before sunrise, they stopped singing and smoked for a few minutes. The leader walked out, dragging the buffalo skull behind him, and made a circuit of the ground, the other man following. Before stepping on to the sticks which had been driven into the ground he bade them get a birch-bark bowl, put water in it, and mix blue earth therein. At noon, every woman and child in the camp was to drink of it. He then announced that he would dance four nights and four days, the first night having just passed. The other performer said nothing. The leader stepped on to the sticks. They removed the buffalo skull and tied the string from the pole to his breast. Both buffalo skulls were laid at the foot of the pole and the second performer was tied to the pole as had been done in the case of the leader.

He continued the dance all that day and the following day. On the second day, about sunset, the parents of the two men made presents of horses to the poor and to old women and to some of the young who had no horses and they gave presents to boys who were orphans.

They danced all night, all the third day, and the following night. The fourth day the leader said he was going out to fight the Cree and the other performer said he would go to steal horses from the Cree. Both said they were glad the others had done what they had asked of them and were glad also that they had completed the dance. They thanked the singers. They said they had had no choice in the matter; they wished to live, and so were compelled to perform the sun dance.

Having said this, they stopped, took the sweatbath, and ate. They bade the men get ready for the party against the Cree, the man who was going out to steal horses saying he would leave in four days.

At the time appointed, the party went out and returned with a bunch of horses. Four days after this the war party went out. On the fourth day out they saw the Cree, killed all of them, and brought home their scalps. After the return home they celebrated a big war dance.

r

This man was told to make another sun dance. He invited an old man to his tipi and requested him to announce this through the camp. All assembled at his tipi. He announced that he was going to perform the sun dance. He could not move around with agility now for he was growing old; even so he would do his best. He had a grandchild, the son of his first daughter. He said he wished this little grandchild to perform the sun dance with him. He was told in the dream that a buffalo skull was to be tied to the child's back. He would fasten it to his own back, however, for the child was too young to bear it.

Some went in search of a buffalo skull while others procured the pole and arranged the ground. He requested the singers not to sing a great number of songs, as he did not wish his grandchild to be over tired. When all was ready he bade the singers stop at sunrise, as he would then go out to the ceremonial ground. They began the song and kept up the singing until the next morning as the sun was rising. Before stepping on to the ground he announced that he would dance two nights and two days. They danced the two nights and two days and the ceremony was then complete.

s

People were remarking to one another that they heard this man say he was going to make another sun dance on a designated day. When the appointed day came he invited an old man, telling him he wished to perform another sun dance and asking him to go around the entire camp and to invite all the young men whom he saw. The guest went around

the entire camp announcing that this man was going to perform another sun dance and was hereby inviting their attendance. He urged all to attend.

When all had assembled at the man's tipi he told them he wished to perform another sun dance; his grandchild was now able to dance with him and he wished to ask the *wakan* beings to give his grandchild all of the power he had possessed, for he was now growing old.

When all had assembled he announced that he was going to perform the dance with his grandchild and asked them to procure a buffalo skull and to prepare the pole. While these preparations were under way he and his grandson took the sweatbath. Having finished this he found that all was in readiness. He bade them cut the flesh of his back and tie the buffalo skull there. He and his grandchild being ready, they danced the first night in the small tipi. When ready to begin he announced that if the singers did not tire they would dance four nights and four days.

They danced that night and the following day, smoking four times during the day. They continued the dance throughout the next day and night and the third and fourth day. After the morning of the first day they danced in the open by the pole. On the fourth day the leader stopped to announce that it would rain before he had completed the ceremony, saying there would be a severe thunderstorm, but no one would be injured. The thunders were pleased that the grandson was dancing and were, for this reason, coming to see him; when the performance was completed the thunderstorm would be over.

A thunderstorm came and lasted for some time. It was over when the dancers stopped, at about sunset. The leader said he was thankful to have finished and thanked all of the singers. It was then about the beginning of July. He bade all of the men get ready to fight as his grandchild was going to lead out a war party and he himself would be the leader of one later in the autumn. The grandchild went out as the leader of a war party, returning with many scalps. When autumn came this man himself went out as the leader of a war party. He returned with many scalps. They celebrated the war dance. Prior to each performance this man had been told in a dream by the thunders to make the sun dance.

t

This is another story about this man. Another time he invited the old man, telling him his dream, and saying he was going to perform the sun dance. The old man went out and invited the young men, telling

them to get the stone, the buffalo skull, and make ready the pole. When these men had assembled they procured the stone, the pole, and the buffalo skull. The performer bade them fasten a string to the buffalo skull and put up the pole. When all was ready he announced that his grandchild would dance with him, and asked them to dig holes in which he was to stand. He and his grandchild took the sweatbath and were then ready. The first night they danced in the tipi. When all was ready he announced that his grandchild was the one to carry the buffalo skull, but that, since he was but a child, his grandfather would do this for him. While they were tying the string to his flesh the following morning, he announced that he would dance until he tore out the flesh. They began the dance that night. He continued through the second day without indications of the flesh tearing out, and so through the night and the third day. The fourth day, about sunset, he tore the flesh. He announced that he could have danced more days had he so desired, but that he did not wish to be severe on his grandchild, and that this seemed to be about all the lad could endure. After tearing out the flesh he took the sweatbath, then ate.

Having eaten, he announced that they would go out on a war party in four days and would then test his grandchild. Four days later they went on the warpath, and four days after leaving the camp killed three Cree. The grandchild killed one of the Cree. All of the party returned to the camp. Everyone was pleased over the accomplishment of his grandchild, for he had brought the party home in safety and the people began to see signs of promise in him. They had a big war dance, using the scalps which had been brought to the camp.

u

Another time he invited the old man telling him he was going to perform the sun dance. The guest invited the young men to assemble. When all had come to the tipi, the performer sent half of them to a certain place to hunt bears, assuring them that bears were at that place. These went to the place designated, while the others prepared the pole, the stone, and the ground. He said that the bear meat was for all of them—they were to partake of it during the singing, whenever they felt hungry. After the bear was brought home and all preparations were made, he announced that at this dance he was going to bestow his life upon his grandchild. They were directed to cut the flesh over his shoulders and fasten the buffalo skull to this. This time he was not going to perform any feat after the sun dance. When all preparations had been made he announced that his grandson would dance only that night and

the following day. He would remain in the tipi until sunrise. He danced that night and the following day, sitting down four times to rest and smoke. After sunset he stopped, took the sweatbath, and then announced that while his grandson was dancing an abundance of buffalo came to watch him. Early on the following day the men were to go out hunting and would secure abundance of buffalo. Next morning all the men went out and secured plenty of buffalo. This was the work of his grandson. It was the third time his grandson had done such things since he began to participate in the dance. In the fight following his first participation the old man had caused the Cree to come to the Dakota party and reckoned this his achievement. The last three feats, however, had been performed by the grandson. The first one was to test him; in the subsequent performances he was given the power.

v

Another time he invited the old man, telling him he was going to perform another sun dance with his grandson and that this time the grandson would be the leader. He no longer had charge of the grandson's performances, but would join him in the dance because he had promised the thunders and the other gods that as long as he lived he would continue to perform the sun dance. Even so, his grandson was this time to be the leader and he would assist. The old man went around the camp inviting the young men who had assisted previously, telling them this man was going to perform another sun dance in company with his grandson and wished them all to come and make ready for it. All those invited came. When they had come he told them he was going to make another sun dance, but this time his grandson would have charge of it. He sent some of the men for the pole. When the pole was ready he bade them get a buffalo skull and tie this to the flesh of his shoulders and to fasten eagle feathers on these strings. He danced all of that night, stopping before sunrise the following morning. As the sun rose he walked out of his tipi and around the pole, the grandson taking the lead and dragging the buffalo skull behind him while the old man followed. Before stepping into their places the old man announced that this time his grandson would dance two days. They danced that day and night and the second day. At noon on the second day, when they were resting for a smoke, the old man announced that they had seen buffalo, deer, moose and elk, coming to watch them dance, so numerous that they covered the earth. All the people would be well supplied with game. They continued the dance through that day. Having finished the dance, they took the sweatbath, then ate, smoked, and the old man announced

again that there would be plenty of buffalo and other animals and the people would have an abundance of meat throughout the year. After this the young men hunted incessantly, and all had a continuous and plentiful supply of meat.

w

An old man happened to go to visit this man in his tipi. People were constantly visiting him for they liked to hear him tell stories of what he saw in his dreams, and of his adventures. He told the visitor he was pleased to see him, in fact, he was on the point of sending for him to ask him to invite the young men, as he wished to perform the sun dance. He went about inviting the young men. When the young men came he told them his grandson was to make another dance. (In a previous dream, the powers had told him they would inform him when they wished his grandson to perform the dance, for the child was too young to have dreams; he might forget to announce them. Consequently, they informed the old man rather than his grandson, and he was to see that the latter performed the dance. Later they would come to the grandson in a dream and inform him at the same time they informed his grandfather.) He bade them get the pole and the buffalo skull, paint the stone, procure the pipe, and make all ready while he and his grandson were taking the sweatbath. Having finished the sweatbath, he bade them cut the flesh over each shoulder, tie the buffalo skull to these places, fastening one string to each horn and put eagle feathers on the strings. That night when all was ready they began the dance in the tipi. In the morning they went outside. Before stepping into their places they walked around the ground, the old man dragging the buffalo skull behind him. He announced he would this time test his grandson by a performance lasting five days and five nights. If the lad endured this it would be a sign that the youth had power from the thunders and could perform anything. Even so, said he, the *wakan* beings would not, for a while, make use of him for any purpose, because he was still too young.

They danced all of that day, the following day and night, the third day and night, the fourth day and fifth night, and all of the fifth day. Then they stopped and took the sweatbath. Having finished the sweatbath they ate and then smoked. Having finished the smoke, he announced that he was going out with his grandson on a war party. At the full moon they started. On the fourth day they killed all the Cree they saw in the camp, the grandson himself killing two of them. The lad thus showed that he was now obtaining power to do things himself, and, when dancing, it was evident that he had the endurance to continue throughout whole days and nights.

The old man had been giving the lad the same medicine which he gave others, to prevent him from thinking about food to eat or water to drink, though he himself never partook of it.

x

One day he invited the old man, telling him his grandson was going to perform the sun dance, and asking him to invite the assistants. When the men invited had come, he bade them get the buffalo skull for him, the pole, and the stone; also two buffalo calf hides, one painted red for the sun, the other painted blue for the moon.

While the others were making the preparations he and his grandson had the sweatbath. When this was finished they bade the assistants move everything out of the tipi and drive down two sticks so that the tops of them would be about a foot above the earth. On these the youth was to stand while dancing. They were to fasten the buffalo skull to the shoulder of the youth. (After the man said he had given his life to his grandson, it became incumbent upon the latter to perform everything exactly as his grandfather had done; for he had not undergone great tortures.) When all was ready they assisted the youth in mounting upon the sticks.

Before taking his place the man said his grandson was to dance five days and five nights. He danced that night. About sunrise the assistants drove the sticks down in front of the pole and, as the sun rose, the youth walked around the ground dragging the buffalo skins, the old man following. The youth mounted the sticks and began the first day's dance. He danced throughout the day and following night, and so through four days to the fifth night.

All this while the young man had the buffalo skull tied to his back and showed no signs of waning power. This time he had been tied to the pole by a string fastened to his chest. On the fifth day after starting the dance, as the sun was rising in the east, one foot slipped off the stick and he tore out the flesh. All who were watching gave the war whoop. Two of them took hold of him and raised him into a sitting posture. The old man stopped dancing, saying that all was well, that nothing would befall the young man for the powers had caused his foot to slip from the stake, with the result that he tore out the flesh. This was because he had danced long enough, and so no harm would befall him. All were pleased to hear this for they feared that something might happen to him as a result of slipping off the stick. After this, when the young man who had taken the sweatbath, had eaten and smoked with the others present, the old man announced that in ten days from that time his grandson would lead out a war party and wished all the young men to accompany him.

When the ten days had passed all the men gathered about the old man's tipi. In the meantime the old man had taught his grandson four songs. When all was ready, he announced that they would spend five nights traveling. The first night, when they camped, they were to dig a round hole about two feet in depth; it would not be difficult to find a stone, for the stone would be there already, to see that the leader sang these songs. The party started. On the first night, one of the young men said he remembered the words of the old man and asked another to help him dig the hole. They did not go far before finding a stone. This they brought to the hole and began to sing. Before beginning the singing the old man announced that about noon on the day after the fifth night they would come upon the Cree; that while the men were away he would be watching them, guarding them, and would know both day and night what they were doing. The third night they did the same; likewise on the fourth and the fifth night. On the morning of the sixth day all put on their war medicine, and saw that guns and bows were in readiness. They encircled the Cree camp, killing all of the Cree and bringing back their scalps. They held a war dance. At this dance the old man announced that he had given his life to his grandson but would assist him in the sun dance; now, however, he had nothing to do with his grandson's performances. He thanked all of those who had assisted his grandson at the dance or in the war party, helping to bring him back safely. He was pleased that his grandson had brought him an eagle feather. From that day on they would depend upon his grandson, the young man now being old enough to act upon his own initiative; he was pleased to see the improvement in the young man and all the people were rejoicing over what he had done. His near relations gave away blankets, guns, and other valuable property.

y

This medicineman was sitting in his tipi with other old men. He told them he was now an old man and no longer strong enough to go out on war parties; that his grandson was young and able to go out to fight and to him he had given all his power. At his death he was going back among the thunders to stay with them awhile; he would dwell among the thunders and whenever they wished, they could send him back to the same place where they had previously sent him.¹

A few days later he invited another man, telling him his grandson was going to perform another sun dance. He asked that the assistants

¹That is, he might be re-born in the same band.

procure the pole, the buffalo skull, and dig two holes for the feet of the performer. When the pole was ready, he told them to tie a red cloth to it as an offering to the sun. The ground was prepared as directed. The first night the man danced in the tipi, keeping each foot in the hole dug for it. The old man was no longer able to dance, and so sat alongside of his grandson. He told them to tie the buffalo hide to the shoulders of his grandson. This they did and the man danced that night in the tipi. Early the following morning he rested, and, before sunrise, smoked. The old man bade them have everything ready outside as he was going to dance there. When all was ready he bade the young man go out. This he did, dragging the buffalo skull behind him.

He went around the ground and stood by the holes dug for his feet. The old man sat beside him and announced that his grandson would dance four days. He danced four days and nights, neither eating nor sleeping during this time. The old man sat by his grandson, eating nothing. On the fourth day, about sunset, the young man tore out the flesh. The dance being finished, they assisted him into the tipi and gave him the sweatbath.

After the sweatbath he ate, and, having eaten, smoked. The old man announced that his grandson would lead a war party when the leaves on the pole turned yellow, and bade them all be ready. When the time came, and the leaves on the pole turned yellow, they went out to fight.

They killed four Cree families. After their return they had a big dance. After this the old man had no strength. He lay in his tipi all the time. He told the people he was then too old to accomplish anything, that he had given his life to his grandson and his grandson would be as strong as he had been. He said that he would be taken by the thunders in the first thunderstorm. Later he said a big thunderstorm was coming. He died suddenly when the thunderstorm had almost passed over. He had not been sick at all. A man went about the camp announcing the man's death. All were grieved over his death, but were glad to hear that he was going to be up among the thunders and would be born again.

That is all about this man. I never heard how his grandson got along. The latter must have been an old man when he died, but they did not tell anything about him.¹

¹The informant had omitted a few of this man's performances, not understanding that I wanted a complete account. I tried to secure the missing ones but he professed to be unable then to give them to me although assuring me he would have been able to do so had he taken them up in their proper places as the account proceeded.

The man described is said to have begun these performances when about fourteen years of age.

NOTES ON THE SUN DANCE OF THE SISSETON DAKOTA

By ALANSON SKINNER

SUN DANCE OF THE SISSETON DAKOTA

The name of this ceremony, *wi wa yag wacipi*, means, sun-look-at-dance. According to my Sisseton informants, Jingling-cloud and Cekpâ, it was performed by all the Eastern Dakota, but more especially by the Sisseton.

The Sisseton believed that *wakan tanka* had created the sun and the moon. The sun they thought was the greatest of these, since it shone upon the people, therefore, when a man made up his mind to go to war and risk death, he first determined to look at the sun and dance. Several might vow to go with him, and on their return, if successful, assist him to give this as a thanksgiving dance. They might vow to dance one night and one day, two nights and two days, or four nights and four days. The founder of the dance would vow, "I will offer a piece of my own flesh as a sacrifice, together with whatever game I can get." If all went well with them he would attempt to secure a buffalo calf of that spring, or a yearling, and he would tan the hide, with the horns, hoofs, and all attached and put it away until the following June which was the proper time for holding the sun dance. Then the lodge was erected and a tall pole was set up in the center, at the top of which the calfskin which was previously stuffed to resemble a young buffalo, was tied. In later times some say a small rawhide effigy of a buffalo was substituted.

In getting this sacred pole, the following performance was gone through. The night before the dance the performers for the following day get together in a large lodge made by joining two or three tipi covers. There all sang and went through the usual invocations to their familiar spirits and the various gods until early in the morning when two youths were sent out as scouts to find the tree which was to be the center pole. This search was conducted with a ceremony designed to make it appear as if they were on the warpath. If they saw human beings on their search they would call this fact to each other by howling like wolves. When they found the tree they would start back, signalling to each other at intervals as though in real war. When they arrived at the lodge whence they had been sent, they were given a pipe to smoke and when they had finished they would tell where the tree was, how far away, and so on, exactly as scouts would report the presence of an enemy. Then the crowd would leave to find it. Other scouts were sent ahead to report in realistic style just where it was. When they were very close one of the bravest men in the party, one who had struck first coup on the enemy or

fought hand-to-hand with a foe or something of that sort, was chosen to be the first to strike the tree. He would first count and reenact his coups and then softly slip up with an ax. After him followed other braves who went through the same performance. At every blow struck against the tree, all present would whoop. When finally the tree was felled, all would cheer and a victory dance was held on the spot. About thirty horses were then brought up and placed in a row and one hundred men came forward to lift the tree which was rested on the horses' necks.

On the journey back to the sun dance lodge ceremonial stops were made and the tree was taken off and rested on the ground each time while the people danced. The fourth stop was made directly in front of the sun dance lodge and this time, the people carried it up and erected it after the rest, while more dancing and whooping went on. When the pole had been erected all came forward and piled sacrifices at its foot as offerings to *wakan tanka*. Then the herald was brought in to thank *wakan tanka* for helping the people and keeping them and to consecrate the sacrifices to him that his poor children gave him in their gratitude.

Then the dancers came in. While the pole was being erected they were painting themselves and preparing. As they entered, they raised their hands over their heads and wept, each saying, over and over, "The pale faces have made me very poor." At the door an usher gave each a certain place that he must keep. After this, the dancing societies such as the no-flights, tokana, and mawatani, came in, bringing their food all prepared. As soon as they entered, the singers began to drum and the song started. Those who were to torture themselves who had been sitting in their places, wore the sashes, and were now raised by the usher, as they were not allowed to rise by themselves. They danced, facing the sun as it rose, and turned towards it, looking at it until it set. They did not look directly at it as that would have been impossible, but fixed their eyes somewhat below the sun. They held bone whistles in their mouths and blew incessantly upon these.¹

The feast brought in by the first society was then distributed to the people at large who sat in a sort of outer circle. The first song would stop and another society would enter and a new song start. The societies endeavor to enter as quickly as possible after the song of the preceding

¹Dr. Lowie notes that "Tawateihe-homini [Wahpeton] once saw a heyoka enter the Sun Dance with a mock whistle. Instead of facing east like the performers he looked toward the west. At this stage none of the dancers had as yet been pierced, but two men told the leaders to pierce the clown's gunnysack raiment and suspend him from the pole. The clown, however, got wind of the plan and made his escape unnoticed. Men acted thus as a result of a dream." (This series vol., 11, 115.)

society has ceased in order to give the dancers no rest. The dancers although in the midst of the feast were obliged to do without food or water. It is said they often fainted and that they wore ruts in the ground by their continual dancing.

From time to time some dancer would go up to the sacred pole, lean his head against it, with his hands raised straight up, and pray, saying that the Indians believed *wakan tanka* was like a white man because his son had been sent among the pale faces. He would tell *wakan tanka* that the red men were poorer than the whites and the pale faces had made them so, finishing by begging a blessing. Then another would come forward and do the same thing until all had prayed.

When at length the end of the ceremony was approaching, relations of the dancers would bring in horses, and each one would put the halter in the hand of his relative who was taking part in the performance and request the herald to tell the people that the performer was giving this horse to some poor person, orphan, or cripple.

During the dance it was customary for many to make skewers and have them fastened in their breasts or back and attached by thongs to the sacred pole. They would try to pull these out if possible. No one made a sacrifice of this sort unless he had vowed it. At some distance from the sun dance lodge the poles would be set up in a circle and from each a tanned calfskin was hung. These were sacrificed to *wakan tanka*, as was the calfskin attached to the top of the sacred pole. After the dance anyone who wished might help himself to the sacrifices. During the dance, incense was constantly burned. It is said that whoever fainted during a dance was obliged to give presents to the people, so everyone tried to keep the dancers at it until they were played out. Likewise, those who were successful in tearing loose from their bonds also made presents but no longer had to take part. During the dance everyone prayed that no rain might fall and if any of the performers secretly cheated by getting a drink at night from some relative, it was thought that rain would certainly fall from the clouds the next day. All the songs during the sun dance refer to *wakan tanka*. One of them was, "*Wakan tanka* has heard our prayer and has answered it."

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