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THE ARIKARA

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

THE Arikara, popularly termed Rees (an abbreviated form of the incorrect spelling, Arickaree), are the northernmost fragment of the Caddoan stock. The earliest known habitat of this linguistic group being within the southern drainage area of the Mississippi, it is apparent that the wanderings of the Arikara have covered a vast range of territory, and any influence which a southern habitat may have had on their arts and customs has been almost eradicated by their long residence in the plains bordering the northern river and by contact with the Mandan and Hidatsa. The Arikara are an offshoot of the Pawnee, and more directly of the Skidi band of that tribe. As to why they separated from their brothers, tradition is not clear, but judging from the surviving remnant of the Arikara and from accounts given of them by early travellers, it probably was owing to their ill-nature, which made it impossible for them to live in harmony with any tribe. According to le Sieur de la Vérendrye the separation of the two bands occurred about 1734, following an extended intratribal war.

In their northward movements the Arikara established their villages at intervals along the Missouri from near the mouth of the Platte to their present locality. It is hard to believe that a people could have travelled so far in such a short time and built so many villages designed for permanent occupancy, the construction of which entailed an enormous amount of labor in cutting, with such rude instruments as they possessed, the logs required in building their lodges. However, the village sites with the traces of their former dwellings are still to be seen, and it is known that within the historical period their movements have been rapid. In 1770 the Arikara were below the mouth of Cheyenne river; Lewis and Clark in 1804 found them above the Cannonball; Catlin visited them in 1841 at Grand river, and after the Mandan had been well-nigh exterminated by the smallpox epidemic of 1837, the Arikara joined the remnant of that tribe below Knife river. After the vicissitudes of nearly a century of northward wandering, they in 1823 came into serious conflict with the Government, when, having attacked a trading party, they were punished by an expedition of troops and friendly Sioux. In 1833 they went southward and rejoined the Pawnee

in Nebraska; but they soon exhausted their welcome, and at the end of two years were forced by their hosts to return to the Missouri.

Tradition and history indicate that at the time of their separation from the Pawnee, the Arikara were a large tribe with ten subdivisions. War and disease must have dealt harshly with them, for when visited by Lewis and Clark they were occupying three villages at the mouth of Grand river and then numbered probably two thousand six hundred. By 1871 they had decreased one thousand; in 1888 there were but five hundred, while in 1907 they numbered three hundred and eighty-nine.

The tribal enemies of the Arikara following the separation and during their migration northward were the Wichita, Comanche, Kiowa, Cheyenne, Apsaroke, and of course the Sioux. At times they were on peaceful terms with the Mandan and the Hidatsa, but more often at war. They say that prior to the establishment of final peace with these two sedentary tribes they could not claim a friend or an ally — every man, Indian and white, was an enemy. While ever prone to create trouble and discord, the Arikara have also been unfortunate in their dealings with the white race. Rival fur companies used them as pawns, a policy which in 1823 culminated in their attack on a trading party of one of these companies, and the resulting unfriendliness continued throughout the succeeding decade.

The first treaty with the Arikara was that of 1825, and in 1851 at the general treaty-making at Fort Laramie an agreement with them and with other tribes was formulated. The first reservation boundaries of the Arikara, Mandan, and Hidatsa were established in 1870, but these were contracted ten years later; in 1891 the reservation was again diminished in area, but in the following year a comparatively small tract was added. In 1887 their lands were allotted in severalty, and by the peculiar acts under which this was effected they became citizens of the United States with the right of franchise. Though cursed in 1820 by rival fur companies, they are far more heavily burdened now through being purchased and thrown into dissension by rival politicians.

The Arikara are a semi-agricultural people, and have apparently been such from an early period, many myths and ceremonies bearing relation to growing corn and other products of the soil. The variety of corn raised is that characteristic of the agricultural tribes in the Southwest— dwarf-like but very leafy stalks with many small ears of varicolored grains growing near the ground.

The primitive dwelling of the Arikara is the same as that of the Hidatsa and the Mandan, previously described; and their domestic life so closely resembles that of their neighbors in practically every respect that little further description is required.

The basket common to the three tribes is claimed by the Arikara as originally a product of their own art, and writers acquainted with the basketry of the southern Caddoan tribes assert that this is a Caddoan pattern. If this be true, we have to do with a craft retained by the Arikara through all their wanderings.

Lewis and Clark stated that the Arikara consisted of ten bands, and although some of these are now extinct, knowledge of the former divisions of the tribe still exists among the older of its members. Marriage within the bands was permissible and was of common occurrence, and children of other unions were regarded as belonging to the father's band. The Arikara seemingly have no knowledge of the clanship system existent in so many tribes. Each band had a head-chief and three subordinate chiefs, and the chief of the tribe was always a member of the Awáhu band. When he died, all the men of the tribe assembled at a feast, at which the first chief of each band had the right to make a speech in nomination of a candidate for the vacant position. No votes were cast, but the man whose name aroused the greatest applause was declared elected. The duties of the chiefs were to extend hospitality to strangers, preserve peace within the tribe, and order hunts and tribal movements. The head-chief made frequent harangues to the people, exhorting the young men to brave deeds and the women to industry and virtue. Any needy person or a stranger in the village could find welcome in the house of the chief, which was kept supplied with food by the hunters.

All the adult males met for the discussion of important questions, but the decision of the majority did not necessarily enjoin obedience on the part of the others; nor could the minority, even though headed by the chief, carry its point if their opponents refused to yield. Thus tribal councils afforded an opportunity for all the men to assemble and reach an agreement, and so avoid internal discord.

Property was distributed at death in accordance with the wishes expressed by the dying person. Usually a small portion was given to the near relations and friends, and the rest to the wife, or the husband, and the children. If a man died suddenly, without time to make known his wish, his parents disposed of his property. A horse or two, some

blankets, and the household belongings were given to the wife, and the remainder, together with the children, were taken by the parents of the deceased. In the case of a wife who had proved unsatisfactory, she was entirely ignored in the distribution.

The taboo, so common among Indians, against any form of communication between son-in-law and mother-in-law prevailed among the Arikara; he must neither speak to her nor remain in the lodge with her, but by giving her an enemy's scalp taken by himself, or many captured horses, the restriction might be removed. Brothers-in-law were the closest of friends, more devoted even than blood-brothers. A man must not remain alone with a sister; exchange of words between them was of the briefest character and only such as was necessitated by daily intercourse.

Marriage was usually arranged by the families of the lovers, but the consent of the girl was always necessary. The relations of the young man went to those of the girl, and asked for her, agreeing to pay a certain stipend, from one to four horses, or perhaps a gun and many articles of lesser value. A first refusal was not considered final, and the young man's relations would continue their efforts. Satisfactory arrangements having at last been made, the presents were brought to the girl's lodge, and the youth claimed his bride. He made her lodge his home for a considerable time at least, and usually for always. Polygyny was common, and marriage to an eldest daughter gave a man a prior right to her sisters as they attained nubility. In case of serious disagreement, separation occurred, the man leaving his father-in-law's house, or, if the couple had a lodge of their own, the wife returning to her parents.

Adultery was punished by beating or by abandonment. If the guilty man were known, the husband would shoot his best horse, and in rare instances the culprit himself was bodily injured. Nothing more than a severe beating was meted out to the woman. A wife who had abandoned her husband might be taken back without disgrace to the latter.

The dead were dressed and painted by the parents and other close relations, and if no appropriate clothing had been left by the deceased they furnished it. The moment life had passed, the family hired some old woman to dig the grave, and at mid-forenoon of the following day her relations placed the body on a buffalo-robe and carried it to the grave, where it was laid on its back wrapped in a robe, the head toward

the east and resting on a pillow. The old woman threw a handful of earth into the grave, with the words: "This man has gone to a happy place. This is a bad place, but he has gone where everything is good." Then the grave was quickly filled. In later times the body of an adult was usually carried on a travois. A gathering of relations and friends followed, and the parents and the bereaved spouse remained by the grave, crying and wailing until sunset, the mourning women usually cutting and gashing their legs. A man in mourning cut the tips of his hair-braids and placed them in the robe with the corpse. The fourth day after death, food and water were placed beside the grave, for the spirit was now to begin its journey, and must be made strong after the debilitating illness of the body. Weapons were never buried, nor were horses sacrificed at the grave. It was simply said of a dead man, *Wetíkaïsh* — "He has gone home."

The soul, called *síshu,* is responsible for all the acts of a man during life; it resides in the breast, and appears in the spoken word, in the look of the eye, in the movement of the muscles. It is *síshu* that rattles in the throat of the dying in its attempt to escape. The shadow, *nanokaátu,* is vaguely identified with the soul. All animals have *síshu,* but not trees or other inanimate objects.

The healers of disease were usually men belonging to the medicine fraternity, but such membership was not essential. In the treatment they used many herbs in connection with the universal incantation; but each herb employed was supposedly possessed of spiritual strength, and the knowledge of its potency with the right to use it was acquired by each medicine-man through revelation, inheritance, or purchase from some other medicine-man. Each acquisition, whether a plant, an animal, or instruction as to method, was an added unit, one more medicine. The more of such possessed by an individual the greater was his standing in the eyes of the tribe. Medicine-men procured many of their medicines by sending their wives as emissaries to men possessing the desired power, a practice common to various other tribes, as the Mandan, Hidatsa, Apsaroke, and Cheyenne.

In treating his patient a healer usually remained four days, not singing, but smoking and praying much to his spirit helpers. If no improvement was apparent, he departed and allowed some one else to attempt a cure, but if progress was made under his ministrations, he usually remained until the patient could move about. After the recovery and before his departure the healer sang his medicine-songs,

in thankfulness for the success of his efforts. In short the treatment was a combination of mental healing, primitive therapeutics, and massage.

CEREMONIES

THE MEDICINE FRATERNITY

The medicine fraternity of the Arikara was composed of nine groups: *Tuwás,* also called *Neksánu, Ghost; Takatít,* Black-tail Deer, also known as A*dhík-adhánu,* Branched Horn, that is, Buck Deer; C*hiwíku,* Shedding (Buffalo); *Kohnít,* an unidentified swamp bird; *Nawín-chitawíu,* Principal Medicine; *Hwat-kúsu,* Big Foot, that is, Duck; Pa, Moon, also called *Whúdhu,* Owl; *Atná-hnuttik'-hánu*, Mother Night, also called *Hachi-pidhínu,* Young Dog, and *Wakanwíu; Kúnúh,* Bear.

These groups had their regular and unvarying positions in the medicine-lodge, their members sitting in a row beside the outer posts in the order named, beginning at the post directly south from the southeastern centre-post. Thus the first four occupied the southern, the last four the northern half of the lodge, the two divisions being separated by the Principal Medicine, who, four in number and representing respectively Beaver, Otter, Muskrat, and Swamp-owl, — all inhabitants of the marshes, — sat in the extreme rear upon a slightly raised square dais of earth. Beaver was always the leader of the Principal Medicine. Above the head of each Principal Medicine man was fastened to a beam a long bundle wrapped in a buffalo-skin and tied securely, and having five large gourd rattles fastened at right angles to its length. These were four of the ten bundles supposed to have been given, one to each band of the tribe, by Mother, as related in the genesis myth, and they contained the stuffed skins of various creatures connected with the mythic emergence and migrations of the people.

Each afternoon the members, appropriately painted in accordance with the manner prescribed by their medicine, danced and marched about the cedar and the stone in front of the lodge, singing to and calling upon the Wonderful Grandmother and the Wonderful Grandfather, that is, the cedar and the stone, which represented respectively Mother, the mythic leader of the people, and *Neshánu,* Chief, the supreme deity.

The ceremony, which began at the time of the ripening of squashes

and continued until autumn, consisted largely of legerdemain. It was appropriately named *Shunáwanúh,* Magic Performance. Each order of medicine-men had its appropriate songs and feats of magic, and each night was devoted to the performance of a single trick or set of tricks.

Following is a brief description of a trick from the repertoire of each order:

The leader of the Ghosts, rising, held a human skull above his head and apparently swallowed it. Then while he lay flat on the floor, face downward, another Ghost covered him with a robe, and when the leader arose the skull was seen lying on the ground.

The Black-tail Deer stood forth in a row and sang; then one of them ran quickly outside, mounted to the roof, and whistled. In the distance was heard the answer of an elk,[1] which was called closer and closer by the continued whistling of the medicine-man.

A skull of their animal was placed by the Buffalo men beside the southwestern centre-post, then all of them danced on the opposite side of the fire. Soon the skull appeared to bellow.

The men of the Kohnít order stood in a row and sang a long time, then ran outside and passed several times around the cedar. They reëntered, ran out again, leaped into the river, and returned into the lodge, each with two large fish in his hands.

The owners of the Principal Medicine brought in a tree-top, the butt about four inches thick, and set it upright in the ground in front of the platform. Then dancing around the fire with his beaver-skin in his hand the Beaver medicine-man at length held its nose to the tree. After a while the tree fell, ostensibly gnawed asunder by the Beaver. In performing another of their tricks the men of the Principal Medicine called a boy from the crowd, removed his moccasins and leggings, and stretched him on the ground. One of them, pressing the tip of a sword-shaped piece of ash against the sole of the boy's foot, caused it to disappear, apparently into his leg. Then the Beaver medicine-man "cured" the lad by bringing the sword to light, for his medicine was supposed to mend broken limbs. Again, the leader of the Principal Medicine stepped forward stretching out his robe, and as the people moved back he shook it, and the gourds tied to the bundles hanging above the platform seemed to rattle.

[1] As indicated by their alternative name of Branched Horn, the Black-tail Deer possessed also the medicine of other horned animals.

The Big Feet, wearing necklaces of duck-bills strung on otter-skin, ran to the waterside and brought back rushes, which a woman was engaged to set in the earth near the fireplace, typifying the marsh where ducks nest. Another woman was called upon, and to her they gave their necklaces, which she raised aloft to the north and then cast among the rushes. Straightway was heard a sound supposed to be the quacking of the spirit duck that was believed to dwell in the body of the leader. As the fire died down he passed to the opposite side of the fireplace and imitated the actions of a duck, and there was heard the sound of a large flock quacking, and flapping their wings in the water.

The Moon medicine-men spread a robe beside the fire, which was then permitted to die down. The leader raised the robe and swung it several times through the air, and then a light was seen streaming down through the smoke-hole, yellow like the rays of the moon. A more spectacular trick was that performed by the same order, when they began by spreading a mat of dry rushes on the ground. The leader painted a black circle around his face, others about wrists and ankles, and a black spot on his chest. Sticks were set up and the rush mat was thrown over them, forming a miniature lodge. With a whistle and a small drum the medicine-man crawled under, and when he had disappeared the firekeeper ignited the mat, which blazed fiercely. Everybody shouted in excitement. When the little lodge was burned to the ground, no trace of the man was to be seen; but some of the people, going to the river, would see him emerging from the water, beating his drum, and staggering as if exhausted. Supported by brother medicine-men he entered the lodge and sat beside the fire, saying, "I have travelled far. I have learned that we are going to have good crops and many buffalo."[2]

A round stone painted red lay back of the Mother Night medicine-men, who wore red paint on their legs, black on their bodies, and red spots over the black on their faces. The wife of a younger member

[2] It is said that there was a time when the Moon medicine was feared and shunned by initiates, because a man and his son, having entered the rush lodge together, failed to return. It was supposed that, entering the earth as usual to escape the heat and flames, they had encountered a thick wall of rock which held them prisoners in spite of three days of medicine-making in their behalf. If there is any basis in fact for this anecdote, the probable explanation is that the father and son, having in the usual manner — whatever that was — made their escape unnoticed from the rush lodge, were set upon at the river's edge and killed or captured by enemies lying in wait for stragglers.

came forward; her hair was then loosened and brushed, and her face painted. She touched the stone, then all the members of the order rolled it into the fireplace, while the keeper was told to build a great fire. When the stone was supposedly red-hot, the young assistant, who had been rubbed with medicine by the leader and encouraged to fear nothing, leaped upon it and "danced," — in reality he touched his feet to the stone a very few times, — supporting himself by a stout staff in each hand, while the flames singed his eye-brows and skin. Quickly he leaped through the flames to the opposite side, where the leader rubbed him with an infusion of herbs. Another act of the Night medicine-men was similar to this. A large earthen vessel was painted red, decorated with four feathers, and set beside the fire, which the keeper then replenished. The men sang while the performer danced around the fire, and all the medicine-men in the lodge gathered about in a circle, crying, "Hurry! Hurry!" Now a woman placed in her mouth a pinch of a mixture of pulverized willow root and an unidentified root, then took a sup of water and sprayed the feet and legs of the dancer. He then stepped into the jar, supporting himself with two staffs, and quickly leaped out sideways. He danced a few moments, and the leader rubbed his body with medicine. A third trick of this group was one in which the chief loaded a gun with powder, bullet, and wadding. His helper danced around the fire, holding the gun aloft, and discharged it. He danced again, then held the muzzle down, when bullet and powder rolled upon the ground.

After the Bear men had sung, one of them, clothed in a bear-skin, ran across the lodge, then dashed madly back and forth. Coming in front of the platform he placed his hands to his mouth and kicked the ground, and when he dropped his hands long bear-teeth protruded from his mouth. The others beat the drum and sang, and another Bear ran out. Some of the strongest men in the lodge were deputed to throw him to the ground and hold him. With a knife they made a pretence of cutting off his foreleg, and either a stuffed foreleg or an object resembling one was then thrown in front of the Bear group. They hurled it across the lodge in front of the Ghosts, while everybody cried, "Hurry! Hurry! Put it back!" One of the Bear medicine-men picked it up, ran with it to the struggling, prostrate Bear, and supposedly reunited it with his body.

Connected with the medicine fraternity were several supernumeraries chosen by the members to perform the necessary manual labor. After a

term as attendant a man had the privilege of buying the medicine of any order and thus becoming a member. Wishing to join the organization, a man first offered a pipe of tobacco to the cedar, crying the while, then he entered the lodge and extended the pipe first to the firekeeper, then to each group in order, beginning with the Ghosts. Finally making his way to the group he wished to join, he held out the pipe to their leader, but the medicine-man clenched his hands as if unwilling to accept it. The aspirant, however, forced them open and thrust the pipe into them, an act taken as a sign that he was to be initiated.

The pipe was then smoked in turn by all the medicine-men in the lodge. The novitiate stripped and was painted, not carefully on this first day, but rather hurriedly, and the painter received his clothing in payment. Medicine was rubbed over his body, and he drank a decoction of roots. From the hour of joining he assisted in the singing, learning thus the numerous songs of his medicine, and he was given some small part in the performance of tricks. He was, in fact, now servant to the selected group instead of to the entire fraternity. From time to time he was given further instruction in the mysteries of his medicine, and for each new lesson a fee was levied. Instruction was apparently not given willingly: there was no desire to help the novitiate become an adept at once. The initiation rather was in the nature of a contest between the older members and the younger, the latter striving to be taught immediately, the former bargaining for the amount of the payment, reserving their secrets and parting with them only after much persuasion and many promises.

When the leader of a group of the medicine fraternity died, the one who had learned the most from him became his successor. The number of members for each group was not fixed. It seems to have been usually four to six, though it must have been considerably larger in the days when the Arikara prospered.

THE MEDICINE CEREMONY

Any tribe living in permanent villages was apt to develop in its religious ceremonies an elaborateness that found expression both in esoteric performances and in those designed more or less for the entertainment of the people. As distinguished from the practices of charlatans, common to many tribes, the so-called medicine rites were all of a religious character.

The Arikara developed the legerdemain of their all-summer medicine ceremony to such an extent that other tribes, far and near, learned of their wonderful and potent magic. The superstition and credulity of the Indian are such that medicine-men living afar, as well as the tribesmen of the performers, believed these tricks to be the mysterious acts of supernatural powers.

This remarkable ceremony of the medicine fraternity of the Arikara has long been dormant, the agency officials having suppressed it about 1885. The writer, desiring to learn as much as was possible of a rite that had such unusual recognition among all the northern plains Indians, made arrangements with the remnant of the fraternity for a performance of it; not of course presuming to make it an all-summer one, or hoping to revive the sleight-of-hand, the secrets of which they admit have been lost, but to reproduce the ritualistic features. For of course the opening days of the rites, as they were primitively observed, were the important ones, the weeks following being measurably a repetition of the dramaturgic events.

The scene was on Beaver creek, in a medicine-lodge of the primitive type, one built within the last few years. This earthen lodge is about seventy feet in diameter and consequently forms a most spacious ceremonial room.

In former times it was the custom, in the early spring before the planting season, to open one of the medicine bundles fabled to have been left with the several bands by Mother (the Corn). The act was accompanied by a repetition of the myth of the genesis and migration of the Arikara, and there followed a dramatic enactment in the nature of a prayer for bounteous crops.

To a performance of this rite was devoted the day preceding the beginning of the revival of the medicine ceremony. During the morning one of the sacred bundles was opened, and the articles of mythological significance were spread upon the dais, which, later in the medicine ceremony, was occupied by the men of the Principal Medicine. There were the ears of corn, symbolizing Mother; the mole, which helped them emerge from the under-world; the fish and the loon, which divided the waters for the people on their mythic migration; the kingfisher, which burrowed into the cliff and threw it into the chasm to afford a crossing for the people; and the owl, which blazed a way through the forest. There were also the skins of a crow and a hawk, two small bird-skins, an antelope-skin, the heads and necks of two

white swans, and a large double-edged sword-like knife of some dark wood. In the words of the Arikara: "Mother has undone her belt. Her feet are placed on the earth, that she may understand we are praying to Neshánu and struggling to help ourselves by planting corn and other things that grow. We pray for rain and moisture, that we may have good crops."

In front of the altar four sticks were set upright in the ground, with two horizontal crosspieces in the forks, and on these lay three bows and arrows, while under the framework were three ears of corn. Three primitive hoes, each bladed with a buffalo-scapula, lay behind the scaffold. As the people assembled, they brought presents and laid them before the altar, and as each offering was made, four heralds ran out and around the lodge, announcing in loud tones the gift made in honor of Mother.

Thirty-nine green osiers (according to the ritual there should have been forty-six) were laid around the fireplace with their butts pointing outward, and a small offering of meat was placed beside the butt of each stick. Then the men formed into four groups, one man to each stick, and carried them outside, where they knelt in a semicircle and uttered three calls. Each group quickly departed in one of the semi-cardinal directions, and at the distance of about a hundred and fifty yards they repeated the three calls and each thrust his stick into the ground, first placing the piece of meat in the hole.

On their return they smeared their bodies with blue-black clay. A Bear medicine-man took from the altar the three bows and arrows and the wooden sword, and placed them around the fireplace, a bow and an arrow at each of three semi-cardinal points, and the sword at the other. Beside the latter they deposited the ear of corn from the medicine bundle, and beside the other weapons the three primitive hoes. The four heralds, standing near these objects, were joined by four women, and a willow basket-dish containing water was passed to the latter, each of whom dipped the tips of her fingers therein and hurriedly stroked her body from the feet to the head, continuing the swift motion until the arm was outstretched overhead. Quickly the hand was allowed to fall. Thus was symbolized a prayer for rain. The heralds then lifted the weapons, and the women the hoes and the ear of corn, and the four couples danced with a swaying movement, the men enacting in pantomime their duty of protecting the growing crops from the enemy, and the women going through the motions of hoeing

the ground, which was believed to soften the earth favorably for the growth of corn. These eight, one by one, were quickly relieved by others of their respective sex from the gathering of spectators, who in turn were replaced by others, and thus the dance was continued to the end of the song. They danced thus at intervals several times to the rhythm of different songs.

A priest now took his position on a buffalo-robe at the south of the fireplace, and with the wooden sword from the sacred bundle in his hand, he fixed his eyes upon a Sioux scalp on the ground before him, and with great feeling and splendid delivery uttered a prayer, the thought of which is:

"They have cleared away the place where the corn is to be planted; they have planted it; the ground grows damp; it begins to grow; now the work is done. The corn will give me strength; I will conquer the enemy. Chief, make everything grow. My Mother has done her work: the corn is growing; the leaves are spreading out; I see the enemy. We are strong. The corn is ripening."

This was delivered quickly, in a chanting voice, a short passage being thrown out with breathless rapidity and extreme vehemence, to be followed by a few words in more measured time, the whole accompanied with the song and the rattles of the singers on the dais.

Then a large wooden bowl of corn-meal mush was brought in and set before the altar. As the singing ceased, the four heralds made an attack on the food, which symbolized the enemy. Seizing handfuls of it, they ran with it to the medicine groups, giving a portion to a man in each, who divided it among those about him. Those receiving the mush burst into weeping; and it was handled as though it were something precious that would confer benefit on the recipient. This act was followed by a general outburst of emotion, crying and praying aloud, and offering of smoke by the men to the spirits.

In the meanwhile men had gone to the far-away hills for a cedar-tree, for such Neshánu had commanded Mother to place in front of the original medicine-lodge. Returning with it they left it some distance from the village. Early on the following day, the first of the medicine rites, many women went to the river, gathered quantities of dry willow boughs, and bore them to within half a mile of the lodge, whence they were to be brought in ceremonially in the evening.

At about the same time the leader of the Bear medicine-men placed his bear-skins on the roof of the lodge, and offerings were laid before

them by any who wished to do so. Following this, the Principal Medicine men went out to bring in the cedar, this ceremony presuming that they themselves had gone to the forest and found the tree. After a full half-hour of singing and praying around it, the priests reverently placed the cedar on the shoulders of four men, who slowly and with seeming emotion brought it toward the lodge, circling about and approaching from the east. As they entered the village, women and children ran out and placed many offerings of cloth on the cedar, and within a hundred yards of the lodge it was deposited on the ground, where it was literally buried under offerings, and infants and older children were brought to the medicine-men for consecration. While repeating a prayer the priests brushed each child from head to foot with a bunch of sage, thus symbolically driving away all evil from it. This ceremonial blessing of children, analogous to infant baptism, is universal with the Indians of the northern plains, its observance being a part of nearly every Sun Dance and other important ceremony. The tree was then taken into the lodge, carried around the central fire, and laid on the ground with its base toward the altar, amid a display of feeling by the different groups of medicine-men, who were already in their places. The Beaver, the leader of the ceremony, further consecrated the tree by rubbing red paint on its trunk and on each branch, and by tying eagle-feathers at its topmost twig as Mother had directed.

In the meanwhile the different medicine groups had painted for the dance, each according to its prescribed form. First, the Moon men went out and danced in front of the lodge around the stone that represents Neshánu. They retired, then reappeared and repeated the dancer, continuing in this manner four times; then one group after the other followed until each had danced the customary four times, when all came forth together. As the entire fraternity danced, there was evident uneasiness and excitement, and constant watching of the entry-way. A warning shout was heard among the dancers as from the entrance dashed two or three men hotly pursued by two Bears. The dancers fled in every direction, pursued by the Bears, who skilfully simulated the actions of real animals. Ever as the Bears chased the dancers, brave individuals tried to slip up behind and strike them with sticks. To succeed in this was regarded as a great deed, since it imparted some of the medicine strength of the Bear. After a time the Bears returned to the lodge as though it were their den, and the dancers crept stealthily up to the entrance, peeping in, but carefully

listening for any movement. Suddenly there was a cry, and out rushed the Bears again, and so great was the apparent fright of the dancers that they fell over one another in their eagerness to escape. This incident was repeated thrice, and then forth came the Bears and two Buffalo, the latter also mimicking the actions of real animals. Four times they appeared together, and then a dancer slipped up and gave the pipe to one of the Bears. With apparent feeling and fear the Bear took a puff at the pipe and emitted a groan of anguish: his power was broken. With his companions he crept weakly back into the lodge, followed by all the dancers. Inside was pandemonium, men going from post to post of the lodge, weeping, crying, some kneeling before the buffalo-skull loudly moaning, others kneeling and standing about the bear-skins or wailing before the buffalo costumes, and still others passing from group to group of the medicine-men, uttering the same wails and howls of anguish. Later in the day the tree was carried out and planted in the ground close to the stone in front of the lodge, and again the members of the various medicine groups, including the Bear and the Buffalo, danced about them.

When the sun was almost set, the women went to the pile of fuel and formed a long line which trailed slowly back, and as they entered the village, people threw offerings upon their bundles of boughs. This brush was deposited in the lodge close to the entrance. After dark began one of the most picturesque features of the entire ceremony, the Sage Dance. All members of the fraternity participated. Their bodies were nude and but slightly painted with white clay; each held in his hand a bunch of sage (*Artemisia*). Sitting in a large circle near the altar, around an outstretched, unworked rawhide, they beat upon it with long rods, and to the rhythm of this primitive drum sang songs of supplication for power to drive away illness. Willow brush was thrown on the fire, and the participants formed a circle close about it, holding the sage before their faces to avoid inhaling the flames. As they danced, more fuel was heaped on until the flames leaped almost to the roof, twenty-five feet overhead; and wilder grew the singing and dancing, the men constantly trying to force their unwilling bodies closer to the fire. They twisted and wriggled, turning first one side and then the other to the heat as it became almost too intense for endurance. Every moment they burst forth into wild concerted yelling. As one watched them from the dark outer space of the lodge, glowing in the brilliant firelight, their bodies seemed almost transparent. At the moment when one began to

marvel that a human being could so long stand such scorching heat, the voices of the singers and the sound of the drum ceased, and the dancers sat down around the rawhide for a period of rest. The Sage Dance was performed four times in all, with brief intervals of rest. As a rule, however, this portion of the rites of the medicine-lodge was observed once each on three successive nights.

"Fire is sacred," said the priest in explanation, "so our medicine-men dance around it to drive away disease. It purifies our bodies and gives us strength, and our shouting frightens illness."

On the afternoon of the next day was seen again the routine dancing of the different medicine groups. This in former times was repeated day after day through the season, while the nights were devoted to the performance of legerdemain.

THE SUN DANCE

The Sun Dance[3] of the Arikara, in its two principal features — the personal supplication for spiritual strength for the individual and the tribe, and the forceful promulgation of precepts of virtue in women — was strikingly like the ceremony among other tribes of the plains, but in its details it differed considerably.

When a man decided to give this dance, he went among the people of the village, asking for arrows. After collecting a number, he carried them for purification to the priest of the ceremony; then filling a pipe, he took it with the arrows to a man who had a very fast horse. Tendering him the pipe, he said: "My friend, I wish you to help me; I am going to make the Sun Dance and I wish you to take these arrows and kill me a fat buffalo." The man smoked the pipe, signifying his consent; then the herald called for men to join the hunt.

They assembled at once, and one of them took from the sheaf of arrows one that seemed the best, which he coated with paint. This arrow the owner of the fast horse was to take, and no other, for with this he must kill the buffalo. When the party went forth and the herd was sighted, he must first single out the animal that had been described by the priest of the dance and kill it. Before any butchering could be done, the leader of the hunt, first instructed by the priest, removed the

[3] Called *Akuchíshhwnáhu (*"house whistle"), in reference to the constant blowing of eagle-bone whistles in the ceremonial lodge.

skin from the face, head, and back of the slaughtered animal in such manner that a broad strip down the length of the back connected the tail and the skin of the head. This done, the others butchered and piled the meat on four horses, and the skin was placed on the fast horse, which was then led to the village, the others following. The priest and the dancers went to the edge of the village to meet them, and three men who had decided to dance took the skin on their shoulders, one at the head, one at the middle, and one at the tail, and carried it about the village, stopping at various places while the people made presents to the buffalo-skin, heaping them upon it. These with the skin were carried into the medicine-lodge

Inside this structure the priest covered the hair of the skin with white clay. Then he called four noted warriors, who after dark went into the woods and selected a straight tree with a forked top. They cleared away the brush around it and remained there keeping constant vigil. In the morning they returned toward the village, running zigzag after the manner of scouts, stepping stealthily as if they saw enemies. Their approach was heralded by shouts, and people gathered on the housetops. The men assembled at the edge of the village, and the priest with the three dancers

— those who had borne the buffalo-skin about the village — went out to meet them. One man in the party stepped forth, dropped his blanket in a heap, and quickly retired, and one of the bravest warriors ran and kicked it, thus symbolizing the striking of an enemy. The priest approached the scouts and asked the news, and was told that they had sighted a large village, meaning of course the tree, which represented the enemy. While the three dancers advanced to meet the scouts, they cried and prayed for success in war, such as these four brave men had experienced. Meanwhile the families of the dancers prepared food for the scouts.

During the day twenty men were appointed, and sometimes one woman with them, to fetch the tree. In preparing to set forth, these men went about the village confiscating horses, as well as spears, shields, and other implements of war, for from the time they left the village they played the part of enemies of their people. At nightfall they went out to guard the tree in the same manner as the four scouts had done.

Early the following morning the people of the village, men and women, donned their best clothing and mounted their best horses, the

men with their weapons. Under the leadership of the three dancers, who travelled afoot, they proceeded toward the tree and stopped some distance from it. The four scouts went forward and soon returned with the news that the enemy was at hand. The word was spread among the attacking party; every one, simulating great excitement, made a mad rush for the tree, while the twenty who had been its guard through the night rode out to intercept them. A mock battle ensued, lasting until the larger party reached the tree, where they halted. They surrounded it, and to a captive girl wearing a scalp tied to her hair was given an axe, which she used to notch the tree; then it was passed to a girl of the tribe, presumably virtuous, but who might have been suspected of being otherwise. If she accepted the implement, it became the duty of any man who of his own knowledge could challenge her, to do so, when she must drop the axe; should this happen, she was sure to die shortly, for she committed an act of sacrilege by accepting the position. It was believed also that a false accuser soon would die. If unchallenged, the girl cut the tree, and, as it fell, a shout of victory went up as though an enemy had been slain.

A length of about twenty feet having been trimmed and cut off, the three young men, whose period of fasting had begun with this morning, assisted by a fourth man, lifted the heavy green pole and bore it to the village, in the centre of which it was deposited. The young women remained in the woods to gather bundles of willows, which they tied to the saddles, and the men to cut poles for the frame-work of the shelter in which the dance was to be held. Just before sunset the three dancers entered a sweat-lodge, prepared by the priest, for a purifying sweat. The priest and a few others accompanied them, while one woman sat in the middle at the rear and another just beside the entrance. A third woman carried in the stones and closed the entrance. During the sweat the priest sang, and when the singing was finished the women prayed for the success of the men in war. At times one of the three dancers, wishing to be specially favored of the spirits, raised himself from the ground by grasping the framework of the lodge, thus exposing himself to the fiercest heat.

A bunch of choke-cherry sticks was tied in the crotch of the ceremonial pole to represent an eagle's nest, and from this was hung the buffalo-skin, head downward, so that the spirit of the buffalo might look down and impart its strength to the dancers. As the pole was raised to be placed in the hole already prepared for it, one of the

three dancers with an eagle-bone whistle in his mouth ran up its length to the nest and back again, moving his arms in imitation of an eagle's flight. The falling of the pole into the pit was greeted with a shout, as if a victory had been won. The women of the village then built the dance-shelter, with its entrance to the east, and at the opposite side was erected a low booth of ground-cedar for the priest and the singers.

The priest and his helpers, old men whom he had chosen to paint the young dancers, one of them for each dancer, dressed in deer-skins wrapped about the waist. The singers for each day were from a different society. Before the singing began a girl was given a rattle, which she held up toward the men in the audience as a challenge. If anyone could personally dispute her claim to purity, it was his duty to do so, and if she were justly accused she relinquished the rattle and sat down disgraced. If her chastity were not impugned, the maiden continued to wield the rattle, and the singing began with great rejoicing. The priest and his assistants danced in a circle, blowing constantly on their eagle-bone whistles and adding much to the furor and excitement. As they danced, any woman who so wished arose, and holding a bunch of willow in her hand, danced, challenging all men to question her honor. The three dancers, with any others who wished to join them, began dancing, and continued, with intervals of rest, throughout this night, and if their strength sufficed, until the close of the third night following, the singers changing frequently. On the morning of the third day, such participants as wished to do so went to different places on the prairie, where each individual was pierced through the muscles of his back by an old man previously engaged by him for that purpose. Skewers were inserted, and to them were tied with thongs a number of buffalo-skins. The sacrificer, moaning and crying out, then dragged the skins into the dance-lodge, around the village, and back to the starting point, where his sponsor withdrew the skewers.

About noon of the fourth day the priest went out of the booth and stood opposite the pole. Such dancers as remained steeled themselves for their final effort of endurance. Joining hands as the priest waved his buffalo-tail fan about his head as a signal, they ran around the pole, each until he fainted from sheer exhaustion. A helper placed cedar leaves on burning coals, and the priest waved his fan over the unconscious men until they revived. As each one regained consciousness he dragged himself to the burning cedar, exposed his body to the smoke, then

crawled back to his place. When the last one had been revived they described their visions. Each dancer during the ceremony had promised the supernatural powers some portion of his body; he now informed the old man which part he had offered, and it was cut off in further sacrifice to these mysterious powers.

MYTHOLOGY

GENESIS MYTH

The earth was inhabited by a race which *Neshánu,* Chief, had brought into being. But some of these people mocked the powers above, and their creator resolved to destroy them. First he transformed into grains of corn those who had not derided the mysteries, and placed them in safety with the animal people in a cavern far under ground. Then upon the earth descended a heavy, constant rain, and the rising flood drowned all whom Neshánu had not chosen to save.

From his garden of golden rustling corn Chief plucked a ripened ear, and out of it he formed a living woman, whom he commanded to descend to the earth and lead the people out upon its surface. She searched long over all the world, and at last, far, far away in the east, she discovered the place where were hidden the animal people, and the others in the shape of grains of corn. She too was carried mysteriously under the ground by Neshánu, and when she stood among the people there, they called her Mother.

As there was no way open by which they could leave their sunless cave, Mother called upon the animal people for assistance, and three offered their services. First, Mouse dug vigorously and long, and he, exhausted, was relieved by Mole, who in turn gave place to Badger. Refreshed by his rest, Mouse crawled up into the long burrow, and at length with his last effort the tip of his nose broke through. Hastening back, he reported his success, and asked that inasmuch as long digging had worn his nose sharp and slender, he and his kind should remain so forever, that all creatures might know that Mouse first had burrowed through to the light.

Then Mole went to enlarge the opening, and as he crept out the bright sun struck him full in the eyes and blinded him, and blind he was permitted to remain as a mark of honor for the part he had taken

in delivering the people.

When the broad-backed Badger forced his body through the hole, the sun was hot and scorched his forelegs and face, and he like the others desired Mother to make the marks permanent upon the Badger people.

The way being now prepared, Mother led all the people to the opening, through which she emerged as far as the shoulders, and stopped. With renewed strength she forced her way out as far as the waist, then as far as the knees. A final effort placed her on the surface, and the corn-people followed. Their former human shape was restored to them. They looked up into the blue sky and were glad; they gazed about them over the broad earth and rejoiced. It was good.

A voice came from above: "West!" After an interval were heard the words: "I have left you a land in the west; go thither. There I have prepared everything, food and all that you need."

They turned their faces toward the declining sun. As they journeyed they reached a large body of water, and while they stood hesitating and afraid on the bank, Neshánu placed in the water two creatures, Garpike and Loon. Swiftly they crossed the water, cleaving it with their bills, and it spread apart, leaving a wide path by which the people began to cross. But suddenly the walls of water rushed together and half the wayfarers were swallowed in its depths.1[4] The survivors continued on their way.

Before the people appeared a great crevasse in the earth, wide, deep, impassable.

"Who in the sky or on the earth will help us?" cried Mother.

Kingfisher responded: "Mother, I will make a road for you." Then he went swooping into the hillside many times, boring swiftly with his bill, and soon the high bank came crashing down, filling the chasm with earth and stones, and the people began to cross. But scarcely had half of them passed safely over when a portion of the bank that had been left standing toppled over upon the others, burying them alive. The remnant struggled onward.

After a while a great dense forest seemed to bar further progress, but

[4] Some of the other versions, of which there are many, differing principally in details and in the order of the incidents, turn these, and others later destroyed in the present account, into animals of species appropriate to the locality in which the transformation took place — fish, loons, kingfishers, and owls.

in answer to her call for help Black Owl came forward, saying, "Mother, I will make a road for you." He flew into the forest, hooting, and the flapping of his great wings brought branches and trees thundering to the ground. When a path lay clear, Mother led her people through, but many became confused, lost their way, and wandered about in the woods until they perished. Again only half survived.

Having passed with such terrible losses through so many dangers, the people stopped to rest. Now Neshánu placed a thought in their hearts, and they prepared the sticks and the round stone for the wheel-and-pole game. They agreed then to play the new game, the victors to take the lives of the vanquished. Mother disapproved of this plan and forbade it, but the people insisted and she reluctantly consented. Three successive victories were necessary to decide the contest. When the very first three trials were won by the same band, they raised a tremendous shout: "Let us not wait! Let us fight at once!"

"Wait! Let us try something else," begged the others.

Two women were selected, and to each were given six plum-seeds peculiarly marked with red and black and white. With the new game thus devised the women gambled, throwing the seeds into a small basket. Again the same player won the first three contests, and once more arose the clamor, "Let us fight!"

Then followed a fearful conflict, and so great was the turmoil and so intense the excitement that the language became confused. When the violence of the battle subsided, here and there on the tops of four hills were as many groups of people, all shouting and gesticulating wildly, and each speaking a language that none of the others could understand. The place therefore became known as *Nawakachí-tadhich,* Where They Stood Shouting On Hilltops, and this was the beginning of the Assiniboin,[5] Yankton, Chippewa, and Arikara. All this was of the doing of Neshánu.

Westward once more moved the Arikara.

The voice of Neshánu, came to Mother, commanding her to build a lodge in which the Mysterious Ones should be worshipped.

"In front of it," continued the voice, "place a stone, which will last forever; and plant a cedar, whose wood endures longer than any other. In the cedar is life, and in the stone is life, and these two will keep

[5] The myth does not take into account the fact that the Assiniboin were originally a part of the Yanktonai.

away a certain creature I have made, *Mahíhu,* Sickness. Call the stone *Atípwadhúhti* [Wonderful Grandfather], and the cedar *Atiká-wadhúhti* [Wonderful Grandmother]. When the lodge is built, enter it alone."

So the house was erected facing the rising sun, and the stone and the cedar were placed in front of it in accordance with Neshánu's injunctions, and immediately there was seen ascending from the tree-top a tall column of black dust. A whisper came from its rustling branches:

"I have raised this cloud. In place of it put eagle-feathers on my head."

Feather offerings were fastened to Wonderful Grandmother's head, and alone Mother entered the lodge, where she found groups of men sitting around the outer circle of posts. Their heads were bowed, and their knees drawn up. They neither spoke to her nor glanced up at her. But after a while those sitting at her left around the post nearest the door looked up and expressed pleasure at seeing her. She went to them at once, and they, who in reality were Ghosts, taught her what wonderful things they knew.

Straight across the lodge Mother passed to those that knew the secrets of the Moon, and next to the second group at their left, where she found the Bears. Again she crossed the open space, this time to visit those nearest the rear, the Buffalo, whence she turned her steps to the Night people sitting at the left of the Moon people.

Next she stood in front of the altar, a low platform that occupied a position in the sacred part of the lodge. In the middle of it sat an old, old man, and at the left and the right lay certain objects. This man was Beaver. He arose and led Mother around the fireplace, and back to the altar. In front of it she now perceived a slough, and in the water she was laid.

"Now you are lying in the water," he said. "Everything over-head that is wonderful is looking down upon you, and will be pleased. Whatever you desire will be given to you. I am the oldest person, the first that Neshánu made."

After Mother had visited the three other groups, the Black-tail Deer, the Ducks, and Kohnít, and received their teachings, all the people in the lodge assumed their real form, and in a whirling cloud of dust passed up through the smoke-hole. Thus did the people receive the rites of the medicine-lodge.

From this place of revelation the people continued to travel

westward. In the distance appeared tall figures which, as the people drew near, proved to be five men and a woman. Nearby grazed a huge black animal. The wanderers gathered around them in awe and expectation, and the one who seemed to be leader spoke:

"I am Neshánu, and these are Sun, Thunder, Wind, and Night, and She Who Causes Things To Grow. Mother, you have seen certain things in the lodge. These things are my law. I made them, and you must keep them.

"There is a certain person called Sickness. Him I have created so that there may be death among the people, lest they should increase and fill the world and starve. For that reason also I have caused that there shall be fighting among the tribes. Whoever is brave and strong in war and helps his people shall wear a shirt like this of mine, with scalps on the sleeves. Him you will call Chief, as you call me Chief.

"Pity the poor; feed and clothe them. He that goes into the hills and there weeps and mourns and prays to me, to him will I give whatever he desires. I have created other people besides you. They did not reverence me and these other wonderful ones, and I swept them from the earth with a flood. But you I have saved, and three things there are that will keep you right: Corn, the office of Chief, and the secrets that were revealed in the lodge. These three things you must preserve always. Never let them die. The corn you have for food, and I give you also this creature. Kill it."

Five men stepped forward and killed the buffalo, then directed by Neshánu they opened the carcass, laid the liver on the ground, and gathered sticks. But no one knew how to make fire, and Chief commanded them to look for something to offer to the spirits. A Dog offered himself for the sacrifice, and after he had been killed, a man who was to be Keeper of the Fire stepped forward. A flash of light from the sky kindled the wood, and the Keeper was enveloped in smoke.

"Behold this Dog!" said Neshánu. "I raised him up to worship me. Always kill a Dog first, that I may know you are worshipping me."

While he was speaking, the liver became a blood-red stone, and he showed them how to make pipes of it before it hardened. The pipes there formed were ever afterward kept in the sacred bundles of the ten bands.

Then the woman, She Who Causes Things To Grow, stepped aside, and soon was seen a strange plant, whose leaves Chief commanded

them to pluck. He instructed them that when they wished to pray or to make offerings to him and the other spirits they should give smoke of this tobacco to Sun in the southeast, to Thunder in the southwest, to Wind in the northwest, to Night in the northeast, to Neshánu overhead, and beneath the earth to the Spirit of Growth. The six mysteries disappeared.

The people resumed their journey, but Dog, lying asleep, was left behind. Awaking, he ran anxiously about in larger and larger circles, trying to find the people, who had passed out of sight. A distant murmuring voice filled the air: "My heart is sore because I have had no smoke!" It was the voice of Sickness travelling in the whirlwind. In terror Dog ran madly after the people. He over-took them at *Piuchitádhiht,* Foggy Hilltop, and dashing in and out among them he found the leader, and panted:

"Mother, you must do something! A person is pursuing us! He says his heart is sore because he has had no smoke!"

Turning, the people saw swiftly approaching an enormous black whirlwind. Its top touched the sky, and its roar deafened them. Confused and frightened, they were uncertain what to do, when the Dog offered himself for sacrifice. The offering was made, and the storm abated, but not before many had perished.

Proceeding to a new locality, Mother prepared to hold the rites which had been revealed to her. There she made the sacred bundles and instructed the people in the mysteries of the medicine-lodge. When they had learned all, she told them one night that she was about to depart, and they must throw her into the river. Ignorant of her meaning, they continued through the night singing the sacred songs of the bundles, and at the end they found in the place she had occupied an ear of corn wrapped in the robe she had worn. It then dawned upon them that this was Mother, and recalling her last command they cast her into the stream.

Only once more, and that after many years, was Mother seen. Again the men sat in the medicine-lodge singing the songs of the bundles, when a strange woman entered. From one group to another she passed unnoticed, until at last she was recognized as Mother. There was great rejoicing over her return, but after giving them new songs she disappeared forever.

FOLK-TALES

THE ELK MEDICINE-MAN

Red Wolf was very handsome and strong, but he was quite poor, and his sole relation was an aged grandmother. Despite his poverty and his lowly rank, he loved the chief's beautiful daughter, and knowing that she had refused many suitors who had wooed her with rich gifts, he resolved to put his chances to the test.

So he stationed himself outside her father's lodge, and in the twilight he saw her slender form pause for an instant in the doorway, then glide down the trail that led to the stream. Quickly he followed, and a moment later, emerging silently from the trees, he saw her standing at the water's edge. The dipper hung listlessly from her hand, and her eyes were gazing pensively into the lapping water. This was his opportunity. He stepped swiftly to her side, threw a part of his robe over her shoulders, and put his arm around her. She did not repulse him, but asked quietly what he wished, and he replied that though he had nothing to give for her, yet he loved her and had come to ask her to run away with him and be his wife. She pondered a moment, then said:

"When do you wish it?"

"At once, to-night," he answered.

But she pleaded for delay and told him to appoint a time and a place for meeting. So on the following evening they met outside the village, she with her bag containing awl and sinew-thread, and he with bow and arrows. All night they travelled, and all day, and at sunset they arrived at the border of the Bad Lands. They had eaten nothing.

Back in the village the chief's family had been searching far and near for the missing girl, but having learned that Red Wolf also was absent and that he alone of all the men was unaccounted for, they concluded that she had eloped; so they covered their faces in shame, for she was the daughter of a chief, and beautiful, and should have been won with many robes and eagle-tails.

In the morning Red Wolf went out with bow and arrows, and soon returned staggering under the meat and hide of a black-tail deer. They ate and were happy.

Of the stomach of the deer he made a water-vessel, then together

they constructed a shelter of brush over a framework of poles and thatched it with grass.

"Remain here for a while," said Red Wolf, "and I will hunt."

So he hunted constantly, killing many deer, and his wife dried the meat and tanned the hides. The season was autumn, and skins were good. One evening he said: "I think we have enough meat and skins now. To-morrow let us repair an eagle-pit that I have found." In the afternoon they went to the old pit, renewed it, and gathered brush to make the covering. Red Wolf stuffed a deerhide and fastened fresh meat at the shoulders ready for use. On the following day the wind changed and came straight from the west,[6] and as the omen was favorable he said that he would hunt eagles that day, adding, "But I will not leave you here alone. Go with me, and midway I shall leave you in the thick cedars. There you must remain. If my luck is good, I shall be gone for a while, but if the eagles do not come soon, I shall return quickly."

So it was planned, and so they did, and by midday he had caught four eagles. They journeyed homeward, happy because they loved each other and the spirits had been kind.

The next day, as the wind still blew from the west, they went a second time to the pit, and again he quickly caught four, when he desisted, since a man cannot easily carry more. A third time the eagle-pit was visited, and the usual number of birds captured, and as they returned, Red Wolf said, "We have enough eagles. To-morrow I shall seek fresh meat."

"I shall remain here," said his wife on the following day, "and finish the tanning of this last hide; then I shall come to the place in the cedars. Wait there if I am late."

So he set out and she began her work. Suddenly she heard the sound of someone clearing his throat, and as she turned quickly her eyes fell upon a wonderfully handsome man. An eagle-feather was in his hair, a string of bear-claws around his neck. An instant she gazed, fascinated, then ran into the lodge to prepare food. Glancing out to see if the stranger were still waiting, she perceived that he had turned away and was walking toward the west. An overpowering curiosity to see whither he was going came upon the young woman, and she at once followed. He passed around a hill, and she turned it just in time to catch a glimpse of him ere he disappeared behind another.

[6] The Arikara trapped eagles only when a west wind was blowing.

In this manner the pursuit continued, until after a while the unknown man vanished into a clump of cedars in a coulée. The young woman paused at the edge of the trees, but a voice invited her: "Come in!" She pushed her way through the thick growth and soon reached a lodge, which she entered. There sat many women, all young and pretty, and all of different tribes; and at the side of the room sat the man.

In the meantime Red Wolf had reached their accustomed rendezvous, waited, and gone on, thinking his young wife must have decided to remain at home. But there she was not. Anxiously he ran to the water, searched all the trails their feet had worn, called and wept, but no trace did he find, no answer rewarded him. At last he abandoned the search in despair and gave himself up to mourning. He neither ate nor drank. On the fourth day, so weak that he could scarcely stand, he started for the stream, and there threw himself down among the trees, thinking, "I may as well die here."

Someone touched his foot.

"My friend, if you are still alive, rise," said a voice; "I know why you are mourning."

A few drops of water trickled into Red Wolf's parched mouth and over his face. His eyes opened, and he saw a man bending over him. The stranger ran quickly to the stream, brought another handful of water, and gave him drink.

"I know," said the newcomer; "you are crying and starving yourself on account of your wife. But she is not far away, and you shall see her soon. Can you get up?"

Red Wolf struggled to his feet, and together they went slowly to the lodge, where the man prepared food. His charge ate, and, refreshed and strengthened, noticed that his new-found friend wore a necklace and wristlets of elk-toes, and two eagle-feathers in his hair, one at each side; that his robe was yellow, and he carried a long willow whistle painted yellow, the green leaves still fluttering from its tip and its entire length wound with a green vine. Red Wolf was eager to start at once on their quest, but his deliverer assured him that he must rest four days and recover his strength. When this time had passed, the stranger said:

"A certain person near here has your wife, but you shall recover her and take all that he has. Now, you must prepare yourself, for that man is ferocious. My son, how old do you wish to be?"

Not comprehending, Red Wolf looked dumbly at his benefactor,

who, seeing his perplexity, went outside and quickly reappeared, a broad-horned Elk.

"This is what I meant," he said. "How old do you wish to be? You are to change yourself into what I am."

"I should like to be your age," answered the young man.

"My son," returned the Elk, "I am not yet strong. Say again how old you would like to be."

"I wish to be middle-aged," said Red Wolf, "neither too old nor too young."

"You are right, the middle-aged one is strongest. Take the things I was wearing when you first saw me, and wear them just as I did. When you get there, act promptly, for that man does not remain long away, and he will be returning with another wife."

They started, Red Wolf leading, and from the top of a hill the Elk pointed, and said:

"Your wife is among those cedars. Raise your whistle and blow; then lower it, turn to the right and walk, and do not look back. When your wife comes, I will tell you."

So the man turned and walked away, blowing upon his whistle, while the Elk remained on the hilltop. Through the trees appeared a line of women running toward the sound of the elk-whistle.

"Your wife is coming," called the Elk; and Red Wolf, looking back, was filled with joy to see his young wife running toward him. But there was no time for words of explanation or endearment; the Elk was urging haste, and all the women were sent hurrying to the lodge. As they passed over the brow of the hill, a man came rushing out from the edge of the woods. He stopped abruptly, and the two opponents discharged their arrows at each other, but without effect.

"Roll on the ground," cried the Elk, and Red Wolf, obeying, became a powerful Elk. His antagonist rolled and became a Bear. Red gushed from his mouth, and yellow from the nostrils of Red Wolf. The Bear approached, watching for an opportunity to rush in, but Red Wolf stood fast, facing him. Suddenly the Bear charged, but the other threw his head down and pinned him to the ground, his horns pressing into his adversary's shoulders. The Elk, seeing that his friend was becoming exhausted, threw his horns down over the Bear's flanks and held him while Red Wolf rested. Thus they relieved each other, trying to wear out their enemy. He was very tough. Still his red medicine continued to run from his mouth and he was growing weak. Finally he lay lifeless.

The victors, once more men, turned wearily homeward. Above the body of the Bear was rising a cloud of fog, which soon spread over all the land, so dense that they could not see their way. Nevertheless they safely reached the lodge, and found the rescued women awaiting them.

"My son," said the Elk-man, "you were ready to sacrifice yourself, grieving for your wife. Therefore, you must not think it necessary to give me anything, especially not your wife. You need not do that."

"Father," Red Wolf answered, "I shall do as you wish: I shall not offer you my wife. But you speak of not accepting anything. I must give you something. Father, I ask you to go outside."

The other passed out, rolled upon the ground, and resumed the form of an elk. Out of a bundle the man took some of his new eagle-tails, and from one of his wife's deerskins he cut narrow strips. A feather and a thong were given to each woman, and Red Wolf went to the Elk.

"Father," he said, "you have refused my wife. I shall not offend you by offering her, but all these others are yours. I will not take them back."

Then the women came out one by one and tied their feathers to the Elk's horns. He was greatly pleased, and decided to give Red Wolf his medicine permanently.

"My son," he said, "I am well satisfied with these women. Now, when it comes to this part about women, I do not think anyone can be compared with me. Once I have seen a woman, even at a distance, a note on my whistle brings her to me. All that I was wearing when first you saw me there among the trees belongs to you; whenever you wish to call any woman to you, wear these things and blow the whistle. She will come. As for war, you have done nothing; you have no name. But you shall do things without being harmed; you shall become a great man. One thing you must do: this woman for whom you mourned you must always keep. Others you may have and throw away, but this one, keep. Now go back with your wife to your people."

He turned toward the wooded stream, lowered his head until the nose almost touched the ground, and whistled. Then he led off on a swift trot and the women followed him into the shadow of the trees.

Red Wolf and his wife gathered up what they could carry, and at sunset they began their journey. All night and all day they travelled, and in the darkness of the second night they entered the village of

their people. They had decided that he should return to the lodge of his grandmother, while she, with the bundle of eagle-tails and skins, should go to her own family.

The young woman was received in utter silence, for the sight of her brought back afresh the feeling that she had disgraced her family by going away, and that with so poor a man as Red Wolf. She, on her part, uttered not a word, but after a while the bundle was opened. Their disgrace was completely forgotten in their surprise and admiration for the rare eagle-tails, and the soft deerskins and mountain-sheep skins. Feathers were distributed among the men of the family, and skins among the women, but still many remained in the bundle, and people came to buy them, so that the chief and his wife received more than would have been the case had their daughter accepted one of her rich suitors. Then Red Wolf's brothers-inlaw sent for him, and around the bed that was to be his they piled many gifts.

Red Wolf became prosperous and honored as the Elk had promised. One day, out of curiosity, he tried his elk-medicine, and it was successful, for the women followed him. Growing daily greater because he could not be harmed in battle, he became reckless in the use of his power, taking whatever women he desired, even the wives of others. At last the men in secret council determined to kill him, and they went against him as he stood on the housetop wrapped in his yellow robe. He made no effort to defend himself, for their arrows were unable to pierce his body.

Less and less did Red Wolf regard the rights of others. At last a young woman whom his medicine had drawn away from her husband obtained from him the secret of his invulnerability, which she quickly imparted to his tribesmen. They made incense of elk-horn and hair, and passed their arrows through it. Then all the village, intent on ridding themselves of this scourge, searched for Red Wolf. They found him on the prairie sitting alone, for he knew that something was about to happen. Their arrows, themselves filled with the power of the elk-medicine, passed through and through his body, and he fell prone. Then, lest life should return to his body, they cast it into a great fire, which burned it to ashes.

LUCKY MAN AND THE BUFFALO[7]

Witákahwhán possessed the favor of the wonderful ones above. His house was always well stocked with food and soft skins, and because of his evident prosperity the people gave him his name of Lucky Man.

One day he set forth on a deer hunt. Soon he had killed an animal, skinned it, thrown the meat and hide on his back, and started homeward. On his way he came upon a narrow, well-marked trail, which he followed down to the edge of a small stream. There on the bank sat a white-haired old woman.

"Old woman," said he, "are you sitting here?"

"Yes, grandson, I am sitting here," she replied. "I do not feel like getting into the water and wetting my legs. Will you carry me across?"

Lucky Man consented, and after taking his meat to the other side, he returned for the old woman. He stooped low in obedience to her request, and she put her arms about his neck. On the other bank he paused a moment, but as she made no movement to release her hold, he said:

"Old woman, you may get down now."

"Take me to the top of the hill, grandson," she coaxed, "then I will let you go."

But at the top of the hill she would only repeat:

"Take me to the foot of the next hill, grandson, and I will get down."

Lucky Man humored her once more, and again asked to be released, but the old woman still insisted on being carried a little farther. Out of patience, he protested:

"Grandmother, I have brought you thus far, and my meat is still beside the stream," and he impatiently pulled at her hands and arms. At that she began to laugh in her cracked, shrill voice, and stopped, breathless, to say:

"You are not doing right; I came to that stream to marry you!"

[7] This tale, read in connection with THE WINNING OF THE BUFFALO (The Mandan), illustrates the assimilation that has been in progress among the Arikara, Mandan, and Hidatsa. Lucky Man is a true Arikara character, but with a change of names and details this story is related by the other two tribes. Whether the incident of the contest with the Buffalo people is originally Caddoan or Siouan is not clear.

Disgusted and alarmed, Lucky Man tugged at her arms, but they seemed to have grown fast to his neck, and her legs to his waist. He had killed his deer before the sun was high, but now the day was nearly spent. He walked on toward the village, but, almost overcome by the mere thought of his disgrace if he should be seen with that horrid grinning old woman with her arms about his neck, he loitered until evening fell and then slipped in among the houses. Carefully avoiding the few who still lingered in the open, he made his way to his own dwelling. Inside were many people awaiting his return to secure a portion of his meat, and keeping in the shadows, Lucky Man went at once to his covered bed.

His parents and his sister observed that he was carrying something, and his father came to the bed.

"My son," he said, "you do not tell what you have brought."

"Father," replied Lucky Man, "what is on my back is hard to get off; it sticks tight."

"What is it?" asked the older man, and the son related what had happened to him. Through the two women the news quickly spread throughout the village, and relatives and friends began to gather in the lodge. All night they sat talking in whispers, and at daylight they called to Lucky Man. He came, his head bent in shame, and sat down. Then his relatives seized the old woman by her white hair and her gaunt arms and legs, all pulling and twisting this way and that, but all they accomplished was to throw her into a fit of laughter.

"This is another way to receive a new relative!" she taunted. "You ought to be giving me the best things you have!"

Realizing the uselessness of their efforts, the people persuaded Raven to come and use his medicine; but even that was unavailing.

"It is very hard," said Raven.

He filled a pipe and sent a young man with it to Red-headed Woodpecker and Yellowhammer.

"Raven gives you this pipe," said the youth. "Smoke it, and come to help him."

They two smoked, and sent a message that they would come. When they entered the lodge, the people filed slowly out, leaving them alone. There sat Lucky Man, his head hanging in shame and his eyes covered with his hands. And there crouched the old woman, wrinkled and white-haired, hunched up on Lucky Man's back, arms and legs gripping him tightly. Woodpecker stood on one side and Yellowhammer on the

other, and after singing their songs they darted in simultaneously and began pecking away at her arms, one starting at each hand. When they had loosened her hold as far as the shoulders, the old woman began to grow alarmed.

"This is very bad treatment," she was heard to mutter, "when they all told me to come."

Raven sat there watching, and calling out to the people what progress was being made; and as the woman's hold was broken more and more, the people began to gather dry wood and pile it up near the doorway. Just at sunset the difficult task of Woodpecker and Yellowhammer was finished. The huge pyre was already blazing, and when Raven sounded his cry of victory, the people rushed in, seized the struggling old woman, and cast her into the roaring fire. The young men stood by watching, and throwing on more wood, until even the bones were consumed; but in the lodge the relatives of Lucky Man were washing and purifying him, and rubbing him with fragrant herbs.

It was night. Lucky Man lay in his bed, sleepless, thinking of the great dishonor that had come upon him. Just before daylight he heard outside the crying of a child. Then came a woman's reproving voice: "Be quiet! Why are you crying? It was your grandfather and your grandmother and uncles who sent us here, but we have not been treated well! "

"That is what has been in my mind," said Lucky Man to himself. "This must be something wonderful. I will go to see."

He went to the door, and in the place where the fire had burned the old woman, there stood a lodge of skins. At each cardinal point hung a buffalo-tail. He approached the lodge silently and saw on its wall the shadow of a woman and a child. Lucky Man's entrance attracted no attention, and he returned to his bed,- when once more he heard the child crying. As he came again to the door the woman was saying:

"I am growing impatient with you! It is not my fault that this has happened. We were sent to get presents of feathers and shells for your grandfather, and this is what we have received. Your father is not treating you well!"

When he heard that, Lucky Man collected many shells and eagle-feathers and an otter-skin, and brought them outside, but the skin lodge had disappeared, and a short distance away he saw the woman and child walking rapidly. As he looked, uncertain what to do, they became suddenly a White Buffalo Cow and a Calf. He decided to

follow them, and set out at once. They were just disappearing over a ridge, and when he reached the top they were still journeying toward the west.

He followed at their own pace, making no attempt to lessen the distance between, for he knew them to be mysterious. Once the Calf looked back, and seemed to wish to return, but the Cow compelled him to go on. A second time he stopped, and disregarding his mother's efforts to drive him ahead of her, he stood waiting for the man, while the Cow went on

"Father," said the Calf, "when we come to the end of the journey, you are not to live, and on the way you are to pass through many dangers. Whenever we come to water, my mother will cause it to disappear. Are you thirsty?"

"Yes," answered Lucky Man.

"Beyond that hill," continued the Calf, "is a lake, but it will disappear before you reach it. Watch me, and you shall drink."

Then he ran ahead to rejoin the Cow, and Lucky Man took up the journey. When he mounted the next rise, no water was in sight; but down in the lowest part of the hollow he saw the Calf thrust one hoof deep into the mud and withdraw it. The two mysterious animals trotted on, and Lucky Man found in the hoof-print a pool of water. He drank, expecting it to afford only a few swallows, but to his surprise the hole remained full no matter how much he drank. As he travelled, Lucky Man pondered over these things, and he knew that in the ways of mysteries the old woman had been his wife and the Calf was their son.

After a time the Calf came back to meet him, and repeated the warning that his mother was saying Lucky Man should not live when they reached their journey's end.

"Beyond the next hill," he continued, "is the first Grandfather waiting for us. Have two feathers ready for him. Are you hungry?"

"I am hungry," said the man, and the Calf gave him a dry buffalo-chip, which as Lucky Man's fingers closed upon it became a ball of pemmican. Like the pool of water, it was inexhaustible.

The next hill was passed, and there lay an old Buffalo Bull. Lucky Man placed the feathers in his hair and the Bull was pleased, but the Cow remonstrated.

"We were not treated well," she said. "Instead of receiving his feathers you had better come along and have your hoof in it."

The Bull arose, shook himself, and went with them.

The next warning of the Calf was, that in the coulee ahead were two Grandfathers. Like the first one they were pacified by offerings of feathers, but again the Cow uttered her reproof:

"If you knew how I have been treated, you would not be so pleased with those feathers. You had better come along and have your hoof in it."

The two joined the others, and all continued westward.

In the next coulée lay three bearded Bulls. As before, Lucky Man pleased them with his presents, the Cow complained of what the people had done to her, and the Grandfathers accompanied her party. Once again the Calf turned back to meet Lucky Man. This time he said:

"Father, over yonder hill are my mother's people. There you will see her father, and I fear you will be killed."

As Lucky Man came up over the crest of the hill his eyes rested on a vast herd of Buffalo filling a broad level plain. The Cow, the Calf, and the six old Bulls were running down the slope to the herd, but Lucky Man waited on the hill and looked. After a while the Calf returned hastily, and informed him:

"The White Cow has told how she was treated, and the Grandfather is displeased. You must give an eagle-feather to each Buffalo to soften his heart. Can you do it?"

"Yes," said Lucky Man; "let us go down."

He fastened a feather in the hair of the Calf's head and another at the tail; then taking a bushy sheaf of feathers from the bundle in which he had been carrying them, he went below with the Calf and tied one to the hair of each Buffalo, beginning with the mother of the White Cow. Then he returned to the hilltop.

"Father," said the Calf, coming to him again, "Grandfather commands that you look for your wife. Four White Cows of the same age will stand together; if you point out your wife, you will be safe. Now, father, look closely. At the root of my mother's tail I have placed a very small burr. By that you will know her."

They went down and found the Buffalo all standing in a circle surrounding four White Cows. Lucky Man walked slowly about, looking intently for the burr, but it was not until the end of his fourth circuit that he discovered it and pointed out his wife.

The man went back to the hill, and very soon came the Calf saying

that he himself was to be identified among three other Calves exactly like him. "But I shall be marked with a small spot of blood," Lucky Man was assured, and following the Calf's advice he was once more successful.

Then the Grandfather insisted that they had tried enough, that the upright animals had medicine so powerful that nothing could succeed against them. Nevertheless it was decided not to give up, and the Calf was sent to bid Lucky Man come and join in the dance. Responding to the summons, the man entered the circle, and at a word from the Grandfather the Buffalo began to dance round and round him, in order to create a cloud of dust before they should crowd in upon him. But the wind of their motion raised the feather that was tied to his hair by a long cord, until it stood straight above his head and lifted him from the ground. Simultaneously the Buffalo rushed toward the centre, but Lucky Man was out of harm's way and they trampled under foot only some of their own number. At the command of the Grandfather they ceased and drew back, and before the dust settled Lucky Man had descended and stood once more on the earth.

At his station on the hilltop Lucky Man was informed that there would be one more trial: he must race with the Buffalo over a course marked by three heaps of buffalo-chips. The Calf announced that he would run with his father, and Lucky Man made his medicine for the Calf, and told him to run in the lead during the first half of the race. Four fleet young Bulls, the Calf, and the man took their places in a row beside the first mound of dung, and the contest began. Running behind the Calf, Lucky Man blew his breath, and a strong wind forced the little Buffalo ahead of all the others. As the racers turned the third mound, Lucky Man took the lead, and blew; and this time a wind opposed the four Bulls, so that the man and the Calf finished the race far ahead of them. Without stopping, Lucky Man ran on to the top of the hill and thither came the Grandfather himself.

"Grandson," he said, "you have won. I sent the White Cow to marry you, that she might get feathers and shells for our medicine; but when she transformed herself into a woman, she blundered in making herself old and ugly. Now she has tried to punish you for what was done to her by your people, yet your medicine has been too strong for us. Go home, and when the snow falls we will visit you."

Lucky Man and the Calf, who after passing over the first hill transformed himself into a boy, journeyed back to the village, and the

people there wondered that Lucky Man returned with a son.

On the fourth day following the first snow of the winter, Lucky Man advised the people to send out scouts to the west. This was done, and the report was brought that the plains were black with animals. Through the herald Lucky Man now bade everybody prepare weapons, for the next day they would kill these animals. One man he took into the lodge, and said to him:

"When you hunt to-morrow, go about and pull a tuft of hair from the beard of each one killed. Bring the tufts to me."

Many of the buffalo were killed, and the people came in laden with red meat. One man brought only bits of hair, but when he threw them down in the lodge of Lucky Man they became buffalo-tongues. The following day the hunt was continued, and hair plucked from the humps for Lucky Man turned into buffalo-humps, fat and juicy. After a third day of slaughter, when hair from the sides of the buffalo furnished Lucky Man with an abundance of ribs for roasting, he turned the buffalo over to the people to hunt at their pleasure.

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