3. A Red Indian Coiffure

Author(s): David MacRitchie

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to be even more to be expected than in the cases of, say, small-pox, or a sty on the eyelid, or the changing of the sex of an unborn child. The carrying of the piece of bamboo—a material commonly used for making water-pipes in Japan—would thus appear to be a method for expressing symbolically to the divinity of the well the desire expressed verbally in the formula recited during the performance.

(k) If a marriage has been unfruitful, the old women of the neighbourhood, on the occasion of the festival of the Sahe no kami, certain phallic divinities, go through the form of delivering the wife of a child, using a doll to represent the infant.* Various ceremonies are performed, in different parts of Japan, at the time of this festival, in connection with the propagation of children. I think it is possible that the date mentioned has been selected as especially suitable for the mimetic delivery in question, because the Sahe no kami are more likely to be present at that time than at any other, and that the performance is intended as a means for indicating to them the patient's need. We may note, in passing, that a childless wife is sometimes given by her friends, on occasions when presents are customary, a doll, as a ceremonial expression of a wish (or perhaps as a form of magic) that she shall bear a child.

(l) Formerly, on the twentieth day of the tenth month, at a celebration held by merchants and shopkeepers under the patronage of Ebisu, "God of Wealth and guardian of markets," a picture of the god was hung at one end of the room in which the celebration took place, offerings of food and of drink were put before it, and mock sales were carried on amongst the participants in the celebration, these sales being intended to cause success in the future real transactions of the persons taking part in them.†

If, as seems to be shown by some, if not by all, of the above examples, certain actions are performed with the express intention of conveying symbolically to some supernatural being the operator's desires, it seems highly probable that other actions will be avoided for fear lest some supernatural being witnessing those actions may be led to cause undesired occurrences which may be assumed to be symbolized by those actions, or, if he be normally protective, may at least be led to permit malevolent supernatural beings to cause such occurrences—that is, it seems probable that certain taboos have been based upon the principle which seems to underlie the examples of positive magic which have been described above. Although I am not at present able to cite any examples of taboos which have been given me as so based, I feel sure that, in view of the multitude of supernatural beings in whose actual presences the Japanese of former days believed himself constantly to move—some of whom (unless offended) he thought would shield him from harm, others of whom he feared—such taboos exist. The taboos upon certain so-called "ill-omened" actions or words during certain periods, such as those connected in some way with the dead, or at night, or at the beginning of the New Year, may, I think, sometimes thus be explained, and all the more logically when we recall that even at the present time evils of all kinds are by many persons regarded as due to the malevolent actions of supernatural beings. W. L. HILDBURGH.

Anthropology.

MacRitchie.

A Red Indian Coiffure. By David MacRitchie.

In all those instances where the remnants of the Red Indian tribes of North America have ceased to live the Indian life, and have been brought under the controlling influence of white civilization, they have more and more abandoned

* *Ibid.*, p. 331.

† E. W. Clement, "Japanese Calendars," in *Trans. Asiatic Soc. of Japan*, Vol. XXX, pp. 52. 53; quoted from "The Japanese Months."

their ancestral customs, until, in some cases, these have disappeared altogether. It is, therefore, of importance that any obsolete or obsolescent custom should be recorded while it is possible. An extremely interesting characteristic of the Wasaji or Osage Indians that has come prominently before me has now probably reached the stage when all memory of it will soon be forgotten by these people themselves.

Mr. George A. Dorsey, Curator, Department of Anthropology, Field Columbian Museum, Chicago, in the brief Preface to his *Traditions of the Osage* (No. 88 of the Field Columbian Museum's Publications, Chicago, February 1904), remarks as follows:—"The Osage are of Siouan stock, and made their home, when first known to the whites, in southern Missouri, northern Arkansas, and eastern Kansas. In 1871 they were removed to a reservation in the north-eastern corner of Oklahoma, which they still [1904] occupy. They are degenerating rapidly, are very lazy, and much addicted to drink; the use of the peyote or mescal [a bitter but intoxicating liquor, brewed from small red berries] among them is rapidly increasing. It must be admitted that this collection of tales does not adequately represent the traditions of the tribe. This is largely due to the difficulty of engaging the attention for any length of time of the old men of the tribe, for reasons above mentioned."

Living as pensioners of the United States, no longer hunters and warriors, but sunk into the condition of artisans and peasant-farmers, with here and there a man or woman of college training and professional career, these Indians are rapidly losing touch with their ancient tribal customs. One of these customs, however, is described in a book which has lately come under my notice, *Life in the Far West*, by George Frederick Ruxton, author of *Travels in Mexico*, &c., published by William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh and London, 2nd edition, 1851. Anyone who knows the country and people described can see that the scenes and experiences portrayed in this book are true; although they are strung together by a slender thread of narrative which may be partly fictitious. The following passage, relating to incidents taking place in the year 1830, or thereabouts, occurs at page 73:—

"Passing the Wa-ka-rasha, a well-timbered stream, they met a band of Osages going 'to buffalo.' These Indians, in common with some tribes of the Pawnees, shave the head, with the exception of a ridge from the forehead to the centre of the scalp, which is 'roached' or hogged like the mane of a mule, and stands erect, plastered with unguents, and ornamented with feathers of the hawk and turkey. The naked scalp is often painted in mosaic with black and red, the face with shining vermilion. This band were all naked to the breech-clout, the warmth of the sun having made them throw their dirty blankets from their shoulders."

The above description is specially interesting to me, as I am able to confirm it from personal observation. In the month of February 1873, I was one of an "outfit" of bison-hunters who were operating in the then unsettled region of south-western Kansas, and one day we found ourselves in the neighbourhood of a large camp of Osages. After ascertaining from one of the band, whom we encountered about a quarter of a mile from the camp, that a visit from us would not be resented, a number of us, leaving our weapons in the waggons under the charge of the rest of our party, followed this Indian to the camp. From the number of lodges, or teepees, as well as from the women and children who were largely in evidence, we estimated the total strength of the band at 100 or 150. They were, it appeared, a sub-division of a much larger band, owning the chiefship of "Sunset," a very able leader of some celebrity at the time. Most of the young men were out on the plains after buffalo. The chief was in his lodge, playing cards with some of his braves, and too proud to take any notice of a few casual hunters, unaccredited by the Government at Washington. The women were busy with the usual squaw-work,

some bringing in great bundles of firewood, gathered in the "timber" that fringed the stream; others engaged in dressing buffalo skins, stretched upon stakes, with the pelt undermost. In this occupation, the utensils they employed closely resembled the rake of a croupier at a gambling table, and with them they steadily and gently rubbed the raw hide, over which was spread a moist preparation, said (with what accuracy I know not) to consist largely of deer's brains. The young children were playing about, much as the children of other races do. Several lads of fourteen or fifteen were testing their skill in launching their iron-pointed arrows, in javelin fashion, at a slim sapling, displaying as they did so an almost unerring aim. But what greatly attracted our attention was the seated figure of an Indian, obviously a man of consequence, who was receiving the attention of a barber, armed with a large pair of scissors.

The chief regarded us in disdainful silence, but the barber was much more friendly, and playfully snipped a few hairs from the beard of one of my companions. It seemed quite appropriate that this *coiffeur* should know a little French, and that he should have some French blood in his veins, as I believe was the case. There is nothing surprising in this, for the great plains to the west of the Mississippi were at one time part of the vast territory of Louisiana, and memories of that time are still preserved in numerous place—and tribal—names. The word *prairie* is a permanent record of French influence on these western plains. The main point to be noted, however, is the appearance of this warrior's head. The scalp was shaved on both sides, leaving only a ridge of short, brush-like hair, "hogged like the mane" of a mule, and standing erect," in the words of Ruxton. Ruxton describes this ridge as extending from the forehead to the centre of the scalp. My impression is that, in this instance, it stretched well beyond the coronal suture. The bare portions of the scalp were powdered with vermilion, as were also the cheeks of this personage. With regard to the disposal of the hair at the back of the head, my memory is at fault. Probably it hung in long plaits, after the Indian fashion. But what struck me most forcibly of all was that the stiff, stubby ridge of hair along the crown of the scalp gave quite the effect of a Roman helmet, or of the helmet worn by modern French cuirassiers. Indeed, it is not impossible that the Roman and French helmet obtains this idea from an ancestral custom such as that of the Osages. This is a matter of speculation. The important thing is to chronicle the existence of the custom.

The Osages that I saw in 1873 were genuine "blanket Indians." That is to say, they were practically untouched by white civilization, although they *did* play cards and understood something of the value of dollars. Moreover, they possessed breech-loading rifles of the latest type. Apart from such details, they represented the true wild Indian. They condescended to inform us that they had arranged to make a raid upon the settlements when the grass was "that high"; and although, for some reason, they did not keep their word, they carried out such a raid in the following year. Their representatives to-day wear "store clothes," and are largely occupied in drinking mescal, according to Mr. Dorsey. It is more than probable that the fashion of dressing the hair which I have described is already obsolete.

DAVID MACRITCHIE.

Mathematics.

Migeod.

Supposed Duodecimal System in Burum Language. (See MAN, 40, 1916.) By F. W. H. Migeod. **4**

If the Burum numerals indicate a duodecimal system, it is certainly a most important discovery. I think, though, it may possibly be found that there are errors in the list as supplied to Mr. N. W. Thomas, and these when corrected may modify