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### The Chicago Folk-Lore Congress of 1893

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## THE CHICAGO FOLK-LORE CONGRESS OF 1893.

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SPACE prevents my giving more than a very brief summary of the results of the above Congress, which must be pronounced a decided success, in spite of many preliminary obstacles. The actual work began on July 11, with an address by Lieut. Bassett, the extremely energetic Secretary of the Chicago Folk-Lore Society. The following papers, forty-nine in number, were then read, though not in every instance by the author:—"Unspoken", by the Rev. Walter Gregor of Pitsligo, Scotland; "Notes on Cinderella", by Mr. Sidney Hartland; "The Superstitions, Customs, and Burial Rites of the Tribes of North-Western America", by Mr. J. Deans of Victoria, B.C.; "The Fatality of Certain Places to Certain Persons", by Miss Hawkins Dempster; "The Rise of Empiricism in Savagery", by Prof. Otis Mason; "The Northern Trolls", by Mr. David MacRitchie; "The Prehistoric Worship of the Hop among the Slavs, and its Relation to Soma", by Mr. E. Majewski of Poland; "Pottery and its Relation to Superstition, with the Influence of Woman in its Making", by Mons. T. Bilbaut; "The Cliff Dwellers of South-Western America", by Mrs. Palmer Henderson of Minneapolis; "Myths, Symbols, and Magic of the East Africans", by Mrs. French Sheldon; "Some Sacred Objects of Navajo Rites", by Surgeon Washington Matthews, U.S.A.; "Sepulchres and Funeral Rites among the Ancient and Modern South Slavs", by Vid Vucasović of Dalmatia; "Telling the Bees", by Mr. Eugene Field; "Comparative Afro-American Folk-lore", by Mrs. Anna Watson of Tennessee; "Creole Folk-Songs", sung by Mr. George Cable of Massachusetts.

On July 12 were read:—"The Symbolism of the Vase in

Mythology, Ideography, etc.", by Dr. Stanilaus Prato of Italy; "Sioux Mythology", by Dr. Chas. Eastman of St. Paul, who is himself a full-blood Indian; "Buried Alive", by the Rev. H. Feilberg of Denmark; "Modern Greek Mythology", by Miss Lucy Garnett of England; "The Magic Poetry of the Finns, and its Application in Practice", by Myself; "The Sign Language of the Indians, with Demonstrations on four Sioux Chiefs", by Lieut. Scott, U.S.A.; "Voodooism", by Miss Mary Owen of St. Joseph, Miss.; "Bulgarian Wedding Ceremonies, illustrated with costumed figures", by Dr. V. Shopoff of Bulgaria.

On the following day came "Japanese Folk-lore", by the Rev. W. Griffis of Ithaca, N.Y.; "Maui the Prometheus of Hawaii", by Dr. N. Emerson of Honolulu; "Corean Folk-lore", by Prof. Homer Hulbert of Zanesville; "Folk-lore of Bassa, Liberia", by the Rev. J. M. Arlis of Liberia; "Tamaro the Terrible", by the Rev. Wyatt Gill of Sydney; "Venezuelan Folk-lore", by Dr. Teofilo Rodriguez; "The Symbolism of Diurnal Birds of Prey among the People of New Spain", by Count H. de Charencey; "The Musical Instruments of British Guiana", by the Hon. J. Quelch, British Commissioner; "Pigments in the Ceremonial of the Hopi", by Mr. A. M. Stephen of Arizona.

On Friday, the 14th, after various Servian and Polish Folk-Songs, came a paper, "How San Geronimo came to Taos", by Mrs. McClurg of New York. This was followed by a series of songs, chants, and prayers of the Navajos, reproduced through a phonograph, by Dr. W. Mathews, U.S.A. In the afternoon the following papers were read:— "Why Popular Epics are Written: a Study of Bosnian and Herzegovinian Guzlar Songs", by Dr. Friedrich Krauss of Vienna; "Marriage Customs in Rumania", by Mr. Arthur Gorovei; "A Lett Heroic Epic", by Mr. H. Wissendorff of St. Petersburg; "A Sort of Worship of Ancestors in Finland", by Prof. Kaarle Krohn; "On Excavations in Cyprus", by Dr. Richter of Berlin; "The Primitive

Horde: a Study of the Rite of Circumcision", by Ludwig Krzywicki; "On the Antiquity of the Folk-lore of the North-American Indians", by Miss K. Stanbery of Zanesville.

On the 15th came "Popular Tradition in France from 1889 to 1893", by M. Paul Sébillot of Paris; "Oral Literature of the French Creoles", by the Marquis Chasseloup de Laubat; "The Taming of the Shrew in Okraine Popular Tradition", by Prof. M. Dragomanov; "Certain Modern Egyptian Superstitions coming from Antiquity", by Prof. G. Maspero; "Customs, Superstitions, etc., of the Argentine Ganchos", by M. Paul Groussac of Buenos Ayres; "The Present State of Research into Letto-Lithuanian Mythology", by Mr. E. Wolter of St. Petersburg.

On the last day a paper was read on the "History of the Svastika", by Mr. M. Smigrodzki; "Studies of the Lithuanian Songs of St. John's Eve", by Mr. A. Jurjan of Kharkov, with illustrations on the piano.

On the evening of the 14th an excellent concert of folk-music and folk-song was given, in which performers from about twenty different countries took part, including natives of Japan, Hindustan, Ceylon, Turkey, Ecuador, and other less remote places.

It is not easy to judge of the respective merits of a series of papers which one has only heard and not read. This is especially true in the present instance, for it happened unfortunately that the building where the Congress was held lay in very close proximity to the Illinois Central Railway. It therefore fell out that every five minutes, or thereabouts, a most unearthly din of screeching engines, coupled with the cling-clang of their warning bells, made hearing an impossibility. Again, in other instances, the voice of the reader was inadequate, and listening under such circumstances is an uncomfortable task. But certainly the papers by Messrs. Krzywicki, Majewski, and Jurjan seemed to me more suggestive and interesting than the

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others, and the first had the merit of taking its hearers back to an extremely remote period, and giving an intelligible reason for the horrible initiation rites of the Australians in a way I have not met with before.

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