PARKER

NORTH AMERICAN INDIANS

Personal Experiences

Among our

North American Indians

——Supplement——

by

W. Thornton Parker, M. D.

Formerly Art. Asst. Surgeon U. S. Army

Formerly Surgeon United States Indian Service

Companion 1st Class Order of Indian Wars U. S.

Northampton, Massachusetts.

January, 1918

Captain W. T. Parker, Co. B, 2nd Regt., R. I. M.

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Dedication

To the soldier heroes, whose praises are seldom heard; the unsurpassed Veterans of Indian Wars.

CONTENTS, Supplement

The Battle Amulet of the North American Indians

Virtues of the Arm Amule–Unexplained Mystery of the Symbol of the Open Hand

"The symbolic tendencies of the North American Indians, and especially the Indians of the great plains, have been very highly developed."

When we begin to study the influences which operate in the development of the Indian warrior we come at once upon that remarkable term well understood by the Indians and known as "medicine." It is impossible to make any investigations concerning the Indian warrior without coming in contact with the magic and the medicine which influences so deeply his military career. What the medicine man has to say about good or bad medicine is of the highest importance in initiating the beginning of hostilities, in postponing or in preventing them altogether.

We are indebted to Dr. Harrington's scientific and interesting work on the sacred bundles of the Sac and Fox Indians, who states that the use of objects is supposed to have mysterious power in influencing the affairs of life among the tribes of the North American Indians. Sacred bundles, signs and symbols occupy a prominent position in the so-called "powerful" agencies known as "medicine." "Apparently the objects themselves

are endowed with a certain degree of supernatural power by which this can directly or indirectly influence the phenomena of life in the interest of the owner."

Dr. Harrington states that the sacred war bundle is one containing "charms,amulets,fetishes or often a collection containing objects of all these classes, together with sacred paints and offerings, and ceremonial paraphernalia." The Indians regard these emblems of mysterious power with the greatest reverence and even fear. They believe them to contain a consciousness of their own, and to understand what is said to them. Harrington eloquently sums up the matter when he says, "Well may the Indian view these mysterious agencies with reverence and respect for within them still lingers the spirit of yesterday, the days he loved, the days of freedom, of forest and prairies, and the glory of war."

From the Hands of the Great Powers

All these mysteries the Indians believe were the direct gift of the Manitos, the great powers of the world, "The glorious powerful sun, the terrible thunders whose wings darken the sky, whose roar shakes the prairie, and whose dazzling fiery darts shatter the trees of the forest, the bold eagle, the swift hawk, the night-seeing owl, the sturdy buffalo, the tireless wolf, the sly weasel approaching his prey by stealth, and the snake slipping unseen through the grass."

CHIEF HOLE-IN-THE-DAY

The most superficial student of Indians, their manners and customs, must be struck by the continual exhibition of devotion to native traditions. How can we find in any people a more fixed and determined loyalty to national methods and customs than among our North American Indians?

These facts were most emphatically brought to the notice of the writer in his personal experiences among the North American tribes. In 1879 the writer reported for duty at White Earth Indian reservation, Minnesota. The flags of revenge were still flying over the grave of the famous war chieftain "Hole-in-the-day" who had been murdered. but whose death had not been avenged. Hole-in-the-day was a war chieftain of great influence and superior sagacity. His picture represents him with his eagle feather decorations, his gleaming tomahawk, and, what is of greater interest, his arm-band amulet. Such arm-bands have been described as made of buckskin decorated with porcupine quills, with thongs at the four corners for tying the ends together about the arms. Where the buckskin joins the band there are four little packets of magic medicine and paint. At the point where the eagle feather is attached are two packets; such an amulet seems to be formed from the buffalo tail bent over to form a loop. While often worn on the belt, these amulets could be used as arm-bands by simply passing the hand through the loop. Hole-in-the-day's arm-band was of fur worn on the left arm, and was a remarkably fine specimen of decorated arm-band amulet of an Indian.

Commandments of "Me-Shaum"

The grand medicine bag, or "Me-Shaum", is a parcel or bundle which is corded with knots, strings, stones etc., and also by hieroglyphical figures of their wars in ancient times. Here are some of the ordinances of the "Me-Shaum": to fast every morning in the wintry season; to fast ten days to obtain signal revenge upon an enemy; to invoke and sacrifice every time a man has killed a bear or choice game; that no woman shall come near the lodge at certain seasons, or eat anything cooked in the same lodge; to give away property to the poor for the good of departed relatives to the land of shades. If an Indian fulfills during his lifetime the requirements of the "Me-Shaum" he believes he will go to Chi-pah-munk or the Happyland, but if bad, he will fall into the waters of Mah-na-sa-no-ah or river of death. "The Happyland is far at the west and abounds in everything that is pleasing to sight or taste." This is quoted from Dr. Harrington also.

These bundles and fetishes and sacred amulets must always be treated with respect, never opened except for a good cause, nor must they ever be allowed to touch the ground, and one of the strictest rules provides that no woman shall ever touch them or any part of them when open.

Those who are followers of the theory of Lieut. Totten of the United States army and others, that our North American Indians are remnants of the lost tribes of Israel will find in the laws of

hygiene governing Indians, and in those relating to the sacredness of medicine or magic, very much to confirm such theories. "Every precaution was taken to care for the medicine, the war bundles, the war amulets, and every night they were hung on a lance thrust into the ground so they might not touch the earth. When the enemy came in view, and not until then, were they opened, and distributed to the warriors who, stripping themselves, put on the medicine headbands and the protective amulets, and painted themselves with the magic paint. With the shrilling of the war whistles and the sound of the rattles they joined in the war dance.

Medicine Adoption Comes Early

It is interesting in this connection to consider how early in life the Indian comes in contact with the mysteries of Indian medicine. When a child is four years old it is then entitled to a name; dog feasts are prepared, and ceremonial war whoops and prayers are employed. "Some old man is asked to pray for a blessing; he prays for the child's name, and for the one who gave him his name. Now the sun must know the child's name, so in the morning they pray to him to take care of the child until he is gray. A man's life, they say, goes like the sun; it rises to a certain hight then begins to decline; so they tell the sun they want this child to grow and live to old age until, like the sun, he finally goes down. Make this child live to old age and believe in the Indian teachings. Let him then live until he is like some

one with four legs meaning that he walks with two canes, and until his hair turns from gray to white."

In Schreivogel's splendid painting, "A Sharp Encounter," the mysterious symbol of the open hand is pictured on the left forequarter of the warrior's horse in the battle charge. This symbol of the open hand seems to express profound meaning to the Indian leaders. Mee-shee-kee-gee-shig (whose name in English is "Dark-lowering-day-clouds-touching-all-around") was the war chief of the Chippewas, and a personal friend of the writer. One evening sitting smoking together as an act of personal regard, and as a token of his sincere concern, he drew for the writer a picture of an open hand and impressively stated that should trouble ever attend him, he was to seek out the most influential Indian chief, and show to him this symbol, and all possible protection would be afforded to him.

In the writer's collection of Indian books, numbering quite 100, he has failed to find any reference to this symbol of the open hand. A recent letter from Mr. Mooney of the bureau of ethnology states: "There is nothing secret or sacred about the Indian hand symbol. Painted upon the breast, pony, or tepee of an individual, it signifies, among the Plains tribes that he has met an enemy in a hand-to-hand encounter. In the instance noted it may be that the Indian who drew the picture could claim such honor, and hence the picture served as his card of introduction."

With all respect to Mr. Mooney's opinion, Mee-shee-kee-gee-shig, who wore suspended from his skunk-skin garters four eagle feathers, for Sioux he had killed in battle, was by no means the only warrior among the many valiant warriors of whom he was the war chief. We must look for a deeper meaning in the symbol of the open hand. As the writer had the honor of being initiated into the rites of grand medicine he witnessed much which reminded him of Masonic ceremonies, and he fully realizes that powerful secret organizations existed among the Indian tribes, and that the open hand symbol represented a very high and an exclusive degree in Indian secrecy.

Study the North American Indian from whatever point we may, they are a wonderful people, strong, keen and tremendously influenced by their belief in mysteries. The half of the Indian story has not been told, and from before our very eyes are passing away traditions and customs more interesting than those of any other primitive people in the world.

NOTE ON EAGLE FEATHERS

Eagle feathers attached to garters and hanging down symbolize "kicked in battle." For enemies killed and scalped the eagle feather is worn upright, either attached to the scalplock of hair or on the war bonnet. In a photograph of Mee-Shee-Kee-Gee Shig, he is shown wearing eagle feathers—attached to his skunk skin garters for

Sioux enemies kicked in battle. His otter skin head fur, surrounds his scalplock from which, one eagle feather is seen standing. This signifies that the wearer has killed—and scalped, one enemy—at least, although he may be entitled to more, just as a soldier may wear only one of several military medals to which he may be entitled, selecting his most prized decorations.

Indian Self Torture and The Torture of Prisoners

When we consider the training and testing of the Indian warrior as we knew of it in the 60's and 80's, we are readily reminded of the ordeal required of those who prepared for a life of chivalry in "the brave days of old." In all ages and even at the present age, the warrior or young soldier is prepared by lessons of self-control, and physical endurance to become worthy of the respect and confidence of those whose profession is war, and whose future is expected to include desperate chances for life in perilous and even terrible situations! The ordeal of the warrior has been the custom of centuries upon centuries and among all peoples to a greater or less extent.

The war-dance in time of war is a very serious affair; in time of peace, however, an opportunity to witness one should not be lost. The most interesting time generally to witness the war-dance is at night, the time usually selected for this ceremony. Then the war-dance is at its best. The warriors are more in earnest and the dance is more impassioned. The place selected is chosen specially for the accommodation of a large number of witnesses, as well as participants, and should be as level and hard even ground as possible. The warriors sit in a large oval, facing inwards at either end of which are large fires or beacons to

afford as much light as possible. The fuel for the beacons is usually some resinous wood, and the supply is renewed at frequent intervals, especially during the most excitement of the dancers. The warriors sit upon the ground wrapped in their blankets. At one end are the war-drums with their drummers and incessant tum, tum, tum, tum is kept up, increasing and diminishing as the musicians endeavor to create excitement or to produce a solemn effect, if required. Finally, when the full spirit of the dancers begins to show itself a warrior suddenly throws aside his blanket and springs into the centre of the dancing place. He dances with the peculiar motions of the Indian, so indescribable, and yet so suggestive that he is able to convey to the onlookers the passions which sway him. We see him leaping first on one foot and then on the other, and calling or crying out with sudden, short Indian yelps which rise at times to an actual warwhoop. These emotions of his seem to be contagious, for he is joined in the dance by another and another Indian, until finally the space is filled with dancing, yelling Indians. The drummers are, in fact, musicians skilled in this peculiar war dance music. With these drum sticks they create such enthusiastic music that the dancers and onlookers seem thrilled with the excitement of the war-dance. A sudden thump of the drum causes all the warriors to be seated. The music begins again. Now some warrior will spring into the arena with great excitement and describe the battle of his fathers, or relate his own prowess as a warrior,

or tell of his duel with his enemy, and of his final victory. He acts out in a most realistic way the whole battle, now advancing, now retreating, striking and stabbing, and cutting and winding up with the revolting spectacle of cutting out his opponent's heart, and then cutting it open and lapping up what of his enemy's life blood he can find in his heart. This scenic battle ends with the act of scalping his enemy. Amid yells of applause he resumes his place, and another and another spring into the arena duplicating all the savagery of their predecessors, and in this weird, fantastic manner the war-dance is continued until the approach of dawn puts an end to the assembly, and sends the warriors to their homes.

At these dances the methods and intention of the "Indian gift" is vividly portrayed. The dancer in the midst of his dance will turn to the right or the left and lay at the feet of an Indian a stick. He places the little stick and informs him that this represents a pony which will be given him on the morrow, or any other gift he chooses to bestow. Now the value of a pony is a large, beaded tobacco pouch, or a handsome beaded otter-skin, or rifle or revolver, or whatever is recognized in Indian trade at that time.

So in a little while the warrior at whose feet the single stick has been laid begins his dance. He will dance an introductory portion of the dance, and then will move to the place where the Indian is, who gave him the little stick, and he will place at this warrior's feet two little sticks, signifying that on the morrow he will give him an

otter skin and a tobacco-pouch for the pony stick. These pledges at the war dance are absolutely in Indian honor and must be kept. An Indian gift is one which can never be refused.

Thirty-five years have passed since the writer first witnessed the impressive, barbaric, features of the Indian war-dance, and my memory retains much of that impressive ceremony. It was well after nightfall, and the Indians had assembled decked out with all the warrior finery they possessed. Gaily ornamented eagle feathers, heavily beaded ornaments, otterskin furs, and beaded breech cloths and leggings, with jingling bells, and metal ornaments attached; beautifully worked moccasins, and tobacco-pouches heavy with bead work, and last, but not least, the gaudy face decorations in warpaint of red, yellow, black and green. The warriors wore their side arms of tomahawk and scalping knife. As the war drums began to beat the Indians formed in a huge oval with light beacons at either end. Experienced drummers with single sticks, wonderfully beat their drums, and adroitly made music suitable for wildly exciting the enthusiasm of all the warriors.

* * * *

In the excellent little encyclopedia concerning Indians published by the Bureau of American Ethnology, Washington, under the head of "Ordeals", it is said that "an ordeal is a form of trial to determine guilt or innocence, but the term has come to be applied in a secondary sense to any severe trial or test of courage, endurance and fortitude: in accordance with these two usages of the

term, ordeals among the North American tribes may be divided into (1) those that showed guilt and to settle differences, and (2) those undergone for the sake of some material or supernatural advantage."

Colonel Dodge has very accurately stated that the very loftiest virtue of the American Indian is endurance. The Indian believes that his torture is an act most acceptable to the Great Spirit.

* * * *

The tortures of the sun dance for obtaining recognition as a warrior are well known. The severest ordeals which test the courage and endurance of prisoners of war have a wide range in the savage ferocity of Indians excited by victory, or maddened by defeat, or by the heavy losses incurred in battle.

The burning at the stake, the fierce mutilations of the prisoner's body—these are comparably well known, but "staked out" is not so well known as the fiercest of Indian cruelty. First a stout stake is driven into the ground, then the prisoner's right wrist is securely bound by hair lariat or hide rope to the stake, and the prisoner stretched out on the ground, then another stake is driven in the ground as far as possible from the first stake, and the arms stretched to their limit and the left wrist tied securely. Then a third stake is driven to which the right ankle is attached,—then the legs separated as widely as possible, the left ankle is secured to the fourth stake. In this manner the body was severely stretched causing great pain. The naked body

of the prisoner is then subjected to ferocious mutilations of a diabolical nature, and lastly a fire is built on the body and lighted, while tormentors howl their hate at the dying victim. Frequently during the Indian wars on the frontier, soldiers and civilians have been found whose remains unmistakably demonstrated the awful manner of their deaths. Among illustrations at hand—a picture of the late Lieut. Kidder, U. S. Army, and his entire command. Discovery of their bodies "page 221, "Our Wild Indians", Colonel Dodge pictures the bodies with the remains of fires on the victims' abdomen, scalped, mutilated, and transfixed with numerous arrows: the awful scene presented itself to a Cavalry Command who found these bodies and buried them with all the honour the cavalrymen could bestow, while on a march in an enemy's country. Staking out the wounded over the large red ant hills has been done for torture, but hardly satisfied the desire for vengeance and hate which Indian captors have seldom, if ever, been known to omit. On the frontier in Indian wars, the torture of prisoners is often carried out by the Indian squaws.

THE LAST TOKEN

My horse is down with thirst, boys,
The sun it rises higher;
I wish they'd kill me first, boys,
But they're building me a fire.

My heart it is not broken, boys,
But my lips are sealed with flame,
Therefore I leave this token, boys,
To tell you I died game—

The troopers find the skeleton of a man.

The body contains many arrows, the lower bones are scattered, one arm is extended as if the victim had been "staked out." The Indian scout finds a spur and is showing it to the Commanding Officer of the Cavalry.

—From Remington's "Done in the Open."

Many indeed are the agencies the cruel Indian brought to his aid in his fiendish torture of helpless captives, cruel looks of hate, and torturing words and gestures, the knife, the spear, the bullet, arrows, fire and stones, snakes and creeping things in general, the rope, the lariat of horsehair or hide dragging the naked wounded captive over the coarse prairie, but one of the most diabolical was the cutting off of the thick skin of the bottom of the foot, and then forcing the agonized, half dead with pain, captive to run, thus mutilated, over the wiry grass, while the yelling tormentors shot with bow and arrows, pistol and gun at the poor wretch struggling to flee to escape death. To give more details of torture of captives would be beyond the limits of a paper for general reading. The diabolical, pitiless torture of women, and even of little girls, defies writing. We came across two little girls at a frontier post rescued by troopers of the Third Cavalry, before their captors had time to murder them to prevent their rescue. A band of Indians near Fort Lyon had each in turn diabolically attacked these poor little white children, after having killed their parents. The Third Cavalry detachment had suddenly attacked the

Indians, and rescued the well nigh unconscious little children fainting with torture, terror, and loss of blood. Some of the Indians had forfeited their lives for these outrages, but most of the band had succeeded in making their escape! The vengeance of frontiersmen and soldiers at Sand Creek, was regarded by the Eastern newspapers as the Sand Creek "Massacre"! and the maddened white men were actually condemned for the "Masssacre"! War is hell, but Indian war is "hell boiled down"! It is surprising that when the National Government, or State, or municipal authorities endeavor to honour veterans, the Indian war veteran is seldom, if ever, honoured, or even recognized. Few there are to care for him, few to look upon him as entitled to a soldier's allowance of commending notice, even on "Memorial Day"! They "defended the frontier," they bravely assisted in the "winning of the West". Are they not deserving of some better fate, than being ignored when other veterans are honoured?

Inhuman torture and pitiless murder has ever come to mind when we think of the fierce Indian warriors who disputed the winning of this land for civilized privileges of citizenship. "They defended the Frontier," is the motto of an honourable organization of Indian War Veterans! How many people living in security and comfort, or even in luxury, have any definite idea of what these words signify. "They defended the frontier." They assisted in building a nation, the like of which the world has never before known, until our ancestors began the great task of winning

this land. When the lines were cast off and the frail ships began their voyage to the shores of the future Republic—the warriors of civilization's great army prepared for the stupendous mission.

Genl. Carrington in his book "Some Phases of the Indian Question" gives, concerning voluntary torture, especially at the so-called Sun Dance, a striking proof of endurance of pain under torture.

A young man, ambitious to be pronounced a warrior, is soon put to the test. A knife is passed through the muscles of the breast, followed by a lariat of dried skin or buffalo hair, and the challenger attempts to pull him from his feet. In case of failure, a horse is sometimes attached, and the breast has been torn from the ribs before the warrior would yield. During this test the candidate is permitted to utter no cry of pain or indicate any sense of suffering, but he may shout his warcry, and glorify the deeds of mighty warriors."

General Carrington also states that "No fit words can adequately describe the mutilation of captured prisoners, when every organ, joint and member, is so slowly and systematically dissevered, that life may be prolonged to the utmost duration of torment. This Indian warfare embodies all possible terrors for the vanquished. There is no capitulation! There is no mercy that does not ripen the victim for more fearful tortures.

From General Carrington's official Report of the Phil Kearney Massacre January 3rd, 1867,

after describing the dreadful catastrophe in which so many gallant Americans were killed, he states that "The scene of action told its own story. The little ridge where the final stand took place was strewn with arrows, arrow heads, scalp poles, and broken shafts of spears. The arrows that were spent harmlessly from all directions show that the command was suddenly overwhelmed, surrounded, and cut off while in retreat. Not an officer or man survived! A few bodies were found at the north end of the divide, over which the road runs, just beyond Lodge Trail Ridge. Nearly all were heaped near four rocks, at the point nearest the fort, these rocks enclosing a space about six feet square, having been the last refuge for defense. Here were also a few unexpended rounds of Spencer cartridge.

Lt. Col. Fetterman and Capt. Brown had each a revolver shot in the left temple. As Brown always declared that he would reserve a shot for himself as a "last resort," I am convinced that these two brave men fell each by the other's hand, rather than undergo the slow torture inflicted upon others.

* * * * * *

The officers who fell, believed that no Indian force could overwhelm that number of troops held well in hand." Their terrible massacre bore marks of great valor, and has demonstrated the force and character of the foe, but no valor could have saved them." "I give some of the facts as to my men, whose bodies I found just at dark, resolved to bring all in.

Mutilations

Eyes torn out and laid on the rocks.

Noses cut off.

Ears cut off.

Chins hewn off.

Teeth chopped out.

Joints of fingers cut off.

Brains taken out and placed on rocks with members of bodies.

Entrails taken out and exposed.

Hands cut off.

Feet cut off.

Arms taken out from socket.

Private parts severed and indecently placed on the person.

Eyes, ears, mouth, and arms penetrated with spear heads, sticks and arrows.

Ribs slashed to separation, with knives; skulls severed in every form, chin to crown.

Muscles of calves, thighs, stomach, breast, back arms and cheek taken out.

Punctures upon every sensitive part of the body, even to the soles of the feet and palms of the hand.

All this does not approximate the whole truth," adds General Carrington.

Of my personal knowledge of mutilations there are some of the bodies too frightfully disfigured to even refer to the horrors, or suggest what they might have been.

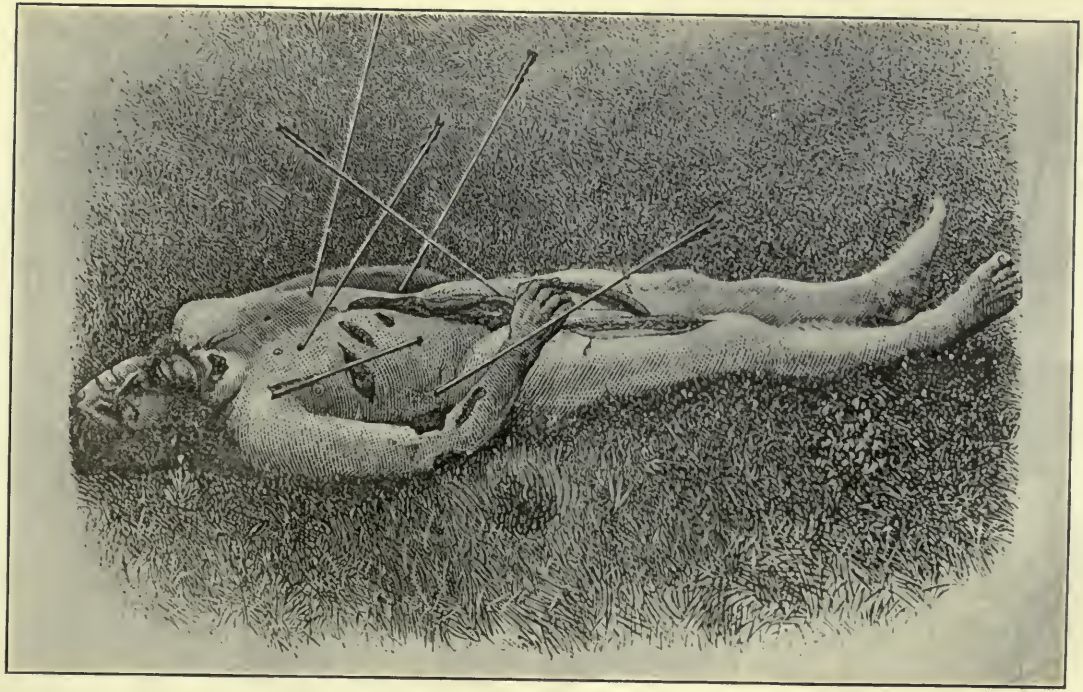
"The great real fact is that these Indians take alive when possible and slowly torture. It is the opinion of Dr. S. M. Horton Post Surgeon, that

of the 81 killed not more than six were killed by balls. Of course the arrows, hundreds of which were removed from naked bodies, were all used after the removal of the clothing.

In Vol. No. 2 of the American Anthropologist, George Bird Grinnell, the well known authority on all subjects relating to our North American Indians contributes a valuable paper on the Cheyenne Medicine Lodge in which he gives a very clear insight into the mysteries of the Medicine Lodge or Sun Dance.

Referring to the voluntary tortures of "swinging to the pole and dragging buffalo skulls" as self-inflicted "for the purpose of making warriors", he states that the general belief that "no man might be considered a warrior who had not endured these sufferings" is not correct, although many writers have stated that "the suffering was undergone by young men who wished to show that their hearts were strong and that it was a test of endurance." Indian agents and missionaries declared that these ceremonies ought to be stopped and hence the action of the Indian Bureau in forbidding them! "The suffering in many cases was the payment in honour of pledges made," and was a sacrifice of self to bring good fortune, or to avert misfortune in future."

"The sacrifice of the body is as old as religion, and is made use of today by religious penitents in many countries including our own—fastings, hairshirts, metal crosses, wristlets and girdles of various kinds, scourges, etc., are all manifestations of the same spirit which has animated our



SERG'T WILLIAMS, U. S. CAVALRY

Indian warriors for centuries. The Indian vow was paid in the Sun Dance or in the Medicine Lodge. The endurance of having the muscles of the breast or back pierced, and a hair lariat pulled through, and then having it tied to lodgepoles or two or three buffalo skulls was to win honourable recognition among the bravest of the warriors!

Following is a description of the body of brave Sergeant Williams, an Englishman educated at Eton and of good family—who was in the line of promotion for a commission had he lived through the battle of Fort Wallace. The leading tribes of the Plains had united their forces and had made repeated efforts to capture Fort Wallace, but had been defeated in three battles bravely fought by the United States soldiers. Bell has described the battles brilliantly in his unrivalled work "New Tracks in North America." "A portion of the sergeant's scalp lay near him, but the greater part was gone; through his head a rifle-ball had passed, and a blow from the tomahawk had laid his brain open above his left eye; the nose was slit up, and his throat was cut from ear to ear; seven arrows were standing in different parts of his naked body; the breast was laid open, so as to expose the heart; and the arm, that had doubtless done its work against the red-skins, was hacked to the bone; his legs from the hip to the knee, lay open with horrible gashes, and from the knee to the foot they had cut the flesh with their knives. Thus mutilated, Williams lay beside his mangled horse. In all, there were seven killed and five wounded.

Each of the Indian tribes has a different sign by which it is known, and it clearly signifies in the mutilated body of the Sergeant the meaning of the wounds. "The muscles of the right arm hacked to the bone, speak of the Cheyennes or "Cut arms": the nose slit denotes the "Smeller tribe" or Arapahoes; and the throat cut bears witness that the Sioux were also present. The tribe indicated by incisions down the thighs and the lacerations of the calves of the legs in oblique parallel gashes may have been "Dog Soldiers." The arrows also varied in make and colour according to the tribe, signifying that warriors from several tribes had each purposely left one on the dead man's body."

The old Indian War veterans who served so faithfully on the frontier, and have faced these red devils of Apaches and other tribes, nearly, if not quite as bad, are slowly disappearing. Most of them have had the "last call" sounded.

The soldiers who served on the frontier against hostile Indians from after the close of the Civil War until 1891 performed services equal to those of the veterans of the Revolution and of the Civil War. These Indian war veterans blazed the way for the settlement of our frontier countries, and protected immigrant and settler in the winning of the west. It is a well-known and indisputable fact, that Indian Wars had a horror of their own; the soldier who served in them faced and braved conditions unknown to the survivors of our other wars.

"Their sabres are rust,
Their good steeds dust,
Their souls are with the saints we trust."

Pretty Near A Lynching in The Texan "Panhandle"

Back in the 80's when stationed at a frontier army-post in the Texan "Panhandle", an order was received one morning giving a detail one hour and a half to prepare for a scout. It was January and cold. Texan "Northers" made scouting in winter a disagreeable detail, especially without tents or sufficient blankets to keep warm, and little if any prospect of finding anything more than a very scanty supply of scrub oak for firewood.

The reason for this winter scout was soon explained. The help of the commanding officer had been requested by the U. S. Postal authorities on account of the sudden disappearance and probable murder of a mail agent. The lost mail agent had driven off from a little "cattle town" south of the garrison to carry the mail to a garrison one hundred miles north. He had a good outfit, but no passengers. Some cattle men discovered his deserted wagon and horses, but the mail seemed to be undisturbed, and nothing indicated a fight with either Indians or "rustlers". He had travelled about twenty miles before his outfit was deserted, but there was no track or anything to solve the mystery as to when or where or how the mail agent had disappeared.

The horses were cold and hungry and had stood out in the open in a moderate "norther".

On account of the suspicious circumstances attending this disappearance, a detail of the Tenth Cavalry with two officers and a surgeon were ordered to search most thoroughly in every direction from the place where the mail agent's outfit had been found—for the remains of the man, or any trail which might lead to his murderers or captors.

The scouting detail rode out promptly within an hour and a half after "Guard Mount" with no wagons or tents, and a scanty allowance of blankets—one for each man to be used as a saddle cloth. The declining sun of a lonely January day found us camped not far from the abandoned wagon locality, and the next morning the search was begun early and vigorously, examining many places for a possible grave of concealment, but without success. All day long we would hunt in every possible place where a body might be concealed. Every spot of earth which suggested that it might have been molested was probed with sabre, and every possible trail followed and carefully examined.

We rode over the wide prairie in open order just near enough for speaking distance, sometimes at a trot or a lope in our efforts to keep warm. One afternoon it was so warm that our heavy military overcoats seemed a burden, when all at once we rode into a piercing "norther" which seemed to sap all our life warmth, and render us chilled to the bone and miserably uncomfortable. Then in some apparently lonely place near a little stream we would camp in the open, and struggle

to make night endurable. In this manner patient faithful search was continued over the dreary desert of the "Panhandle" in January weather, but without result. The cook had little to provide in the shape of food, and the wood which the barren land afforded gave out little warmth, but our good pipes, tobacco, and matches, and soldiers' yarns and jokes defied the uncomfortable experience.

One day while we were resting and eating our rations for the noon meal, a half dozen Indians came to our halting place. They were soon begging, like Cheyenne rascals that they were, for food, tobacco, cartridges, anything they could hope to get for nothing. Suddenly one of the command discovered four or five scalps of white women hanging from a Cheyenne's belt. Every soldier sprang to his feet in deep anger, and for an instant it looked very dark for the fate of the Indian who possessed the scalps of poor white women who had been victims of Indian cruelty and murder. Golden hair, auburn hair, black hair, all carefully combed and tied with ribbons hung from the belt of an Indian within reach of swift and sure vengeance. But the Commanding Officer sternly ordered the soldiers to halt, and the Indians to get away at once, if they valued their lives, which warning they hastily improved. Then the Commanding Officer ordered sternly that no soldier should follow them under pain of disobedience of orders. Some watched the rascals ride away from the vengeance that at least one of them merited!

Now and then it seemed as if a spot had been found suggesting a possible grave; every clue was thoroughly searched, and the Commanding Officer and the Surgeon promised a box of cigars to the trooper who made the successful find.

All the misery of the search did not utterly destroy the patience of the command, although it was sorely tried. Every trail seemed to lead in the direction of "Brown's ranch", a place of evil report where the worst of crimes had been suspected. With no clue of any value as to the whereabouts of the mail agent dead or alive, the search was abandoned, and the welcome order was given to march for the garrison.

The Commanding Officer charged everyone to refuse any information, and to have little if anything to say about the scout, and on no account to refer to "Brown's ranch"!

We rode on with all haste, until we reached the "parade" of old Fort E. The trumpeter sounded halt for the last time. The officer in command made his verbal report, the scout was ended. We sent our horses to the stable, and hastened to our quarters, just as the darkening afternoon seemed to promise another "norther".

In spite of caution and commands, somehow the news leaked out of the suspicions concerning Brown's ranch! Then the cowboys and citizens in M., a little cattle town a mile away, got hold of the news with some additional information easily manufactured, and a considerable excitement was stirred up against the Browns. That night a

lynching party was arranged to start early in the morning to clean out the whole Brown outfit and hang the men to the telegraph poles! But when morning came a furious blizzard was raging, too cold even for the cowboy's hot blood. All the day it raged, and several days had come and gone with one blizzard following after another, making the lynching trip to Brown's too hazardous for even northern Texans. But suddenly, like lightning from a clear sky, the telegraph clicked out the news to the astonished cowboys that from one of the frontier settlements of southern Texas, word had been received that the mail agent was in a little town safe and well, save for a rather slow convalescence from a prolonged spree! He had made no effort to conceal his identity, and had frankly acknowledged deserting his outfit. His valuable papers were still safely sewed up in his coat, and he had not taken a cent of money belonging to anyone. He explained the situation, that dazed with cold and weariness he had sought help from his bottle of Texan firewater, and had forgotten all that had happened until he found himself sheltered in a cabin in a frontier settlement. For sixty-five miles he claimed he had had nothing but crackers and water, and an occasional help from his Texan firewater. He described the experience of being driven south before a "norther," and more dead than alive he had received the rough welcome and care of good-hearted Texan frontiersmen. This was the yarn we were asked to believe by the postal authorities of the "Panhandle" mail route. The experienced frontiersmen summed it up, with their well known esti-

mate for doubtful and uncertain narratives,—"important if true"!

The Hero's Roll Call

"On The Field of Honor"

Valiant Acting Assistant Surgeons of the United States Army Who Have Done Their Soldier's Duty.

"Not here! Dead on the field of honor." This was the answer given in the roll-call of La Tour d'Auvergne's regiment after his death—"Pas ici; mort sur le champ d'honneur." This can be said with equal justice of brave men who have fallen in battle in every war, and among these heroes are many of our personal friends in this country like Capt. Wallace of the 7th cavalry, Gen. Custer's old regiment. Wallace served with Reno's division in the great battle which ended the military career of many heroes. Afterwards he fell in the first fire of the treacherous Indians at Wounded Knee. Many of our Indian war heroes found lonely graves on the frontier in the "Twenty-five year war," as our Indian wars have been called, and alas, in many instances, their mortal remains found only coyotes and rattlesnakes for shrouds, when their bones bleached uncared for. The cruel savage had exhausted every diabolical plan for torture of their prisoners.

During his experiences covering intervals in many years the writer has never met anyone who had escaped from Indians after having been made captive.

In the military post chapel of Fort Leavenworth, Kan., there is a beautiful mural brass cross-tablet with the inscription "In memory of the Acting Assistant-Surgeons of the United States Army—who have fallen in the line of duty —in the service of their country—Requiescat in pace, A. D. 1889." During the Indian wars the surgeons who lost their lives in battle, or from exposure, were, in the majority of instances, Acting Assistant-Surgeons. This follows naturally because the senior surgeons were supposed to remain in the forts or at headquarters.

In Indian war formation there is practically no rear, all are equally exposed to danger, excepting perhaps the medical officers who most actively attend to the wounded, in spite of increased danger from exposure.

In a copy of the London Spectator of some two years ago, I read a poem in memory of an officer of the Cameron Highlanders, "Pas ici," etc., which applies so well to some gallant friends, officers and soldiers, that I feel induced to copy it for those who may be interested:—

This guerdon, in the days of chivalry,
France gave the soldier whom she held so dear.
Still should his name be called, and still not here!
"Dead on the field of honor" should reply
Be made, that so the dead should never die,
But still the name of one no longer near

Like music on the march, should thrill the ear,
And point a way to immortality.
Death crowned with honor, Ivan, it is true—
Only "not here" was never truth of one
So still, so wonderful, so brave a part
Of noble memories, so beloved as you.
How could the mother fail to keep her son
Though fallen, always safe within her heart?

As the shadows lengthen we call to mind so many brave and true American soldiers, officers and men, so many brave hearts with whom we had the honor to serve in the department of the Missouri. For most of them "taps", the last call, has sounded, and soon indeed its pitiful notes must sound for us who now remain to cherish the memory of the brave and the true, who sleep in honor waiting the glorious reveille!

CHIPPEWA TOMAHAWK

A Chippewa Tomahawk, A Tribal Heirloom

An Indian Gift With A History

The Indian who bestows a gift expects an equivalent of equal or greater value but nothing less.

At the ceremony of the war dance there is usually an opportunity to witness very clearly what is meant by the term "Indian Gift", Indian exchange would be a better term!

In the gift dance, one of the dancers leads off by placing at the feet of some warrior among those sitting on the ground in the oval of the great war dance, a little stick and informs him that this act represents the gift of a pony which he will receive on the morrow.

Now the value of the pony may equal a large beaded tobacco pouch, a handsomely beaded otter skin or something else of value to the Indian.

In a little while the man, at whose feet the single stick has been laid, begins his dance, and places at the feet of him, who has been his doner, two little sticks signifying that he will give for them an otter skin, tobacco pouch or something else.

An Indian gift is therefore one which can never be refused.

One day a visitor called at the Bishop Whipple Hospital to see the "Mus-Kee-Kee-Win-Ni-Nee", Indian name for medicine man or doctor.

He was a fine young sub-chief of the Chippewas, tall and straight as an arrow. He was indeed an interesting sight to behold. Above the deep vermilion colored part of his raven black hair, the warrior's eagle feather rose. He wore a pair of handsomely beaded deer skin Chippewa moccasins and deer skin leggings. And about his body was wrapped a large snow-white blanket which he wore with chiefly pride. On his left arm rested a very handsome tomahawk with a heavy brass head and long wooden handle. For a short distance the handle was wound with otter skin and was ornamented with many brass tacks. He walked like a man of powerful frame, entered the hospital parlor where he waited standing for the Surgeon whom he greeted with a hearty "bo-zho-nitchee", Good-day Friend.

The interpreter stated that the young chief had called to pay his respects, and he made a very kindly and dignified speech to which the surgeon replied. Then when cigars were offered he accepted one, cut off the end, lighted it and then placed it in the pipe end of his tomahawk and smoked it. At last the chieftain rose to deliver his parting words. Speaking kindly of the coming of the pale-face doctor, and of his good wife to whom the Indians had already given the name "Gee-Shay-Wah-Dee-Zig", the Indian's true friend, and of their little son whom they had already loved to call "Mus-Kee-Kee-Win-Nin-Ninz", the little medicine man, he stretched forth his tomahawk and offered it to the surgeon as a gift and token of friendship. The Indian related that the oldest Indians on the reservation had

always known of this tomahawk as an ancient Tribal Heirloom highly prized by all, and yet treasure that it was, the chieftain said he wished to present it to the doctor. The surgeon was surprised at the offer, and immediately urged that such an heirloom should remain with the tribe if happily for many more generations! Again the chief offered, the surgeon refused. "Does the medicine man refuse my gift," asked the warrior. And the interpreter hesitatingly answered "He does." With an angry look the Indian gathered his great white blanket around him, and strode out of the hospital. Seeking the meanest Indian he could find on the reservation, he gave the splendid weapon to him as an insult to the surgeon.

In a short time this episode was related to Chief "Mee-Shee-Kee-Gee-Shig", Dark-Lowering-Day-Clouds-Touching-All-Round. He was the war chief of the Chippewas, and an uncle of the young chieftain who had offered the tomahawk. He was also a friend of the surgeon. He knew at once the motives which actuated the surgeon for declining the gift, so he quickly hunted up the poor Indian to whom it had been given, and gave him five dollars for the tomahawk. Hurrying with it to the hospital, he explained to the surgeon the Indian custom concerning gifts. He said, "My good friend, please accept this from me," and so the incident was closed. The surgeon gave the war chief a silver watch in exchange for the tomahawk. For thirty-five years this tomahawk has been highly prized by the present owner. It is still in perfect condition.

The brass head is about eight inches high by three and a half inches at the largest portion of the blade. The handle is about two feet long. The heavy brass head of the tomahawk is for use in war and for peaceful purposes to be used for a pipe. The handle has been bored for this purpose, and its extreme end has been fashioned as a mouth-piece. Upon the brass blade an Indian shield, feather decorated and cross spears have been engraved, and below this an Indian beaver, and above all P. E. B. Co., some long since forgotten company of English fur traders who brought these brass tomahawks over the sea to trade with the Indians for their valuable furs. On the other side is an engraving of an Indian warrior. The pipe bowl is also ornamented. The weapon was indeed worthy of an Indian chief of high degree. A glance would suggest a tomahawk and pipe; but the hatchet end, although deadly, could not give such a terrible wound as the pipe end which could smash a large round hole in the skull like a fifty calibre bullet.

All this is but an item in the history of this remarkable weapon! What tales of bloody warfare it might relate if it could but speak? What exciting battles it must have witnessed, and in its strange and fierce history, how many owners must have enjoyed the proud honor of possessing it. At what famous war dances and Indian ceremonies must it have held a conspicuous place; and now it occupies a little space in the library of an old Indian war veteran, and nearby to keep it company, hangs the owner's frontier sabre and "six-shooter", fit companions, emblematic of the

Pale-face victory over brave but conquered Indian warriors.

BUFFALO BILL—A TRIBUTE

Noted Scout and Comrade of Army and Navy Union.

A deserved tribute to Col. William F. Cody, Buffalo Bill, is paid by William Thornton Parker, M. D., National Aide-de-Camp, Army and Navy Union, and companion of the Order of Indian Wars, himself a veteran in Indian campaigns. In the Springfield (Mass.) Republican, Dr. Parker says:

"A brave Indian war veteran, gentle, true, manly, fearless. He believed in men and trusted them until deceived. A faithful friend, an honest enemy, forgiving, affectionate, and truly heroic in danger. He shared the dangers of service in the Indian wars, among soldiers whose watchwords were victory or death. He served among men ready to die, but refusing to surrender. There is no other alternative in Indian war service. He abominated lying, treachery, deceit, and he loathed a bully. He was frank and plain-spoken, one of those real men who believed in nailing his flag to the mast. In the best sense of the word he was a man. His life added laurels to the respect the American veteran soldier has learned to cher-

ish for those heroes of the plains in the "25-year-war," as the Indian wars were called, the American army scouts. In the sublime word of the ancient Vedic funeral rite, let us say of Col. Cody:

"'Go thou, brave comrade, deceased, to this earth, which is a mother and spacious and kind. May her touch be soft like that of wool, or a young woman, and may she protect thee from the depths of destruction. Rise above him, O Earth, do not press painfully on him; give him good things; give his consolation. As a mother covers her child with her cloth, cover him.'—New York Times, Jan 21.

"We recall Wild Bill, Billy Dixon, Amos Chapman and other famous scouts of the plains. Buffalo Bill was their equal, and as brave men they would accord him the highest place of honor."

Col. Cody was an active member of Canton (Ohio) Garrison, Army and Navy Union.—Editor.

—The American Standard Army and Navy Union Official Organ, Washington, D. C., March 1, 1917.

Preparedness In The 60's

May I be pardoned if I state that it makes an old Indian war veteran "pensive" to see pictures in old weeklies, of Christmas boxes, mail bags of letters, and all kinds of goodies, and comforts, sent to the worthy soldiers of the Civil War, and later on to those serving so faithfully in the Spanish War, and at the Pacific Island Stations. And now our charitable women are knitting scarfs, and sending chocolates and pipes and tobacco to foreign soldiers; but who ever heard of anything being sent to our gallant soldiers of the frontier in the Indian Wars of the 60's?

Almost every dollar of their pay was spent for some necessaries, or so-called luxuries, like goat's milk, butter for which they had to pay $2.50 a pound, seldom obtainable even at such a price. Poor sardines cost us $1.50 a box, and at the post traders were to be found a limited assortment of woolen shirts and stockings. No one pretended to wear a collar or "boiled shirt", the frontier name for cotton shirt. Sometimes the good Indians at agencies would get "boiled shirts," and wear them proudly all outside.

In loneliness, with seldom, if ever, a letter or newspaper, for our mail was brought to us through many dangers by the brave pony express riders; with everlasting wishing to know what was going on in the world, and how it fared with friends at home, for those who had any place to

call home; the monotonous days dragged along. Hardly a book in sight except perhaps a well-worn copy of army regulations, or the morning reports or sick reports, or an occasional printed order from Department Headquarters, the findings of a court martial of some desperate, homesick soldier who perchance had fallen asleep on the post, and had been sentenced "to be shot to death by musketry."

Oh! the loneliness of it, the darkness of the evening, the silence save perhaps the coyote calls, or the more cheering roll of the drums and screaming of the fife for the various daily signals which mark the time of day for us in garrison.

And then in the desperate days when the morning and evening gun was silent for lack of ammunition, and rifle cartridges were almost gone, we saw looming before us the cruel fate of unpreparedness. All this made us bitterly resentful, and I fear we would find fault with the Government which had apparently deserted us.

Now and then the news came of this or that command, too few in number to stand the everlasting superiority of our Indian foes who had slaughtered and mutilated our soldiers in some desperate battle. There was no surrender for our soldiers, for surrender would mean a frightful death of torture by the demonish red-skins. The Indians could surrender and receive humane treatment, but for the soldier it was a fight to death.

Then would come what seemed to us a day of reckoning for these Indians, for our soldiers, after terrible marches in the heat of summer, or the

cold of winter, half starved, and often maddened with thirst to such an extent that they would open their veins and drink their own blood in their despair.

All sorts of gloriously brave exploits by our army boys would eventuate in cornering our murderous Indian foes for the punishment they needed and richly deserved; and then would come the news that some philanthropic societies in Boston or Philadelphia, who loved the Indians, would demand of the president that telegraphic orders should be sent to Headquarters, and that mounted couriers should be dispatched to the field of war to call out the troops, and promise the Indian food and clothing and gifts, and even guns and ammunition, if they were willing to surrender, which on such occasions they were only too eager to do. But nothing, absolutely nothing, for our brave boys who had behaved so well in their tattered, dirt-covered clothing, ragged and worn, unfit for uniforms for such gallant men. Are not our Indian war veterans worthy of respect, if not of some justice, to provide for their needs in their old age?

I have seen Troop "F" of the gallant old 3rd United States Cavalry, the regiment with whom I had the honor to serve in the 60's, giving exhibition drills in the East. Their uniforms were spick and span and in perfect soldierly fitting; and this brought to my mind the time when their brave predecessors, the "yellow-legs" of the same old regiment, of whom everyone should be so proud, had, instead of boots, strips of "gunny

sacks" tied as best they could about their feet instead of boots, and in place of well-fitting uniform coats whole "gunny sacks", the bottom corners of which had been cut off and a wide slit made in the bottom, so that these dirty sacks could be pulled over the head like a sweater, and with a cord or rope tied about the waist; this was the uniform for many of these heroes of war.

How good Saint Francis of Assissi,—whose ragged habit has won so much veneration,—must have looked from heaven, for he had been a soldier in his early days. How he must have admired and blessed them in their enforced poverty. How he who voluntarily starved himself, must have pitied them for the miserable food and their wretched beds on the wet ground! The arms these soldiers carried they kept as clean and serviceable as possible for instant use, but shining brasses and polished steel were not for the gallant old 3rd in those dreary days which tried the souls of the bravest.

THE REGULAR ARMY INDIAN WAR VETERAN

The following interesting clipping is taken from the monthly publication, Headquarters National Indian War Veterans, Denver, Colorado, and may be of interest to some of your readers:

Among the communications received during the last month, there was one from the "Society of the Grand Army of the Republic," by Comrade

Alson B. Ostrander, Past Patriotic Instructor Dept. of New York G. A. R. In this pamphlet great stress is laid on the services of the men of the G. A. R., and justly so. However, due credit also is given the Veterans of other Wars. And in respect to the Indian War Veterans, it says:— "Our regular army since the end of the Civil War, I fear, has not been given all credit due them from our citizens. The great work performed by Union Soldiers during the Civil War has so overshadowed the work of our soldiers since then, that they have not received all the consideration due to their acts and service.

In 1865, when 960,000 Union Soldiers were mustered out of service the Government retained a small standing army of between 20,000 and 40,000 men. At that time less than one-third of our geographical area was settled upon. That great territory between the Mississippi River and Pacific Coast was but little known. The greater portion of it had never been surveyed and settlements were very few and far between. But the tide of immigration settled that way, and for more than twenty years our soldiers on the plains and mountains were engaged in a warfare almost as disastrous as our struggle for the Union. We fought for the preservation of the Union and they fought for "The Redemption of the West." Their service was equally as arduous as ours. The same long marches, camp and garrison life, and their many battles with hostile Indians were equally as dangerous and far more horrible many times over, in results than we encountered during the Civil War.

In proportion to numbers in service, the loss in Regular Army soldier life was nearly as great as in the Civil War, and in proportion to numbers engaged it was greater. For in several instances whole commands were wiped out of existence. War is wicked and horrible enough at best, and during our Civil War, even if defeated, we had some assurance of life, but with our troops on the plains it was—"Victory or Death." For the Indians never took prisoners except for the purpose of horrible torture, and I know personally that many of our officers and men reserved one cartridge, for use against self rather than be taken prisoner. All these men—Veterans in every sense of the word—I hope to see admitted into the future Grand Army of the Republic, &c."

Nothing more gratifying to Indian War Veterans than the commendation of the Veterans of the Civil War, than whom no better soldiers have ever existed in any land, or won more glorious laurels in any war.

W. Thornton Parker, M. D.

National Indian War Veterans Association.

February 22, 1917.

—Northampton Gazette, March 1, 1917.

DR. W. THORNTON PARKER
Surgeon U. S. Indian Service, White Earth Reservation, Minn.