

INDIAN "SNOW DANCE."

SCENE AT STANDING ROCK AGENCY, FORT YATES, D. T.

Half Naked Bucks Dancing to the Beat of Tomtoms While the Thermometer Stands at 28 Degs. Below Zero—Dog Soup for Refreshment.

I had long been wanting to see an Indian "snow dance," when one Saturday, after the usual bi-monthly issue of rations, it was rumored that there was to be an unusually large one about four miles from the post. It was a clear, cold winter night, with the mercury standing at 28 degs. below zero. The members of our little party were soon snugly nestling in the straw at the bottom of a government sleigh, and we were traveling toward the dance as fast as four good miles could draw us.

The dance was held in a low log house, about forty feet long and eighteen feet wide. We alighted at the door, around which were gathered a crowd of invited spectators. The door and windows were open and the house, which was not divided into rooms, was lighted by two kerosene lamps. We entered during a lull in the festivities. In one end of the room, squatting on the ground close to the wall, were thirty-five or forty squaws, dressed in their usual calico dresses and wooden shawls. Around the walls at the other end sat the male guests, each with his blanket or sheet drawn over him. In one corner of the bucks' end of the room was a tomtom, or Indian drum, around which were seated just as many old bucks as could crowd into the little circle.

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Soon after our entrance the old fellows around the tomtoms began to beat them with measured cadence, at the same time accompanying the sound by crooning a weird song. Suddenly one buck threw off his sheet, and springing to his feet began to dance. He was quickly followed by the others, and in a moment our brains were almost whirling at the grotesque sight. The dancing consisted of a series of horrible contortions of body and face, and the one who was first to begin singing and yelling, the feet, meaningly keeping accurately the cadence of the drums. Imagine my surprise when I noticed that notwithstanding the extreme cold of the night these men were almost entirely naked, most of them wearing no clothing but a pair of moccasins, and a pair of beaded neckties. They were painted in the most striking manner from head to foot. Each had a headdress or bonnet of colored buffalo hair, with a fringe of eagle feathers running down the back. Brass bracelets and anklets and strings of beads were also a decoration of them. The description of the decorations of one of them will serve for all.

In addition to the adornments above mentioned he had a double string of sleigh bells running from his ankle to a strap passed around the leg at the knee. At the small of his back, attached to his moccasins, was an immense bunch of long, colored buffalo hair. His face was painted saffron yellow, with a large red spot on either cheek and horizontal red lines running across the forehead. His eyebrows and the edges of the lids were painted a dazzling white. His body was red and his arms and legs were a light blue, with occasional bands of yellow. In one hand he brandished a tomahawk, highly ornamented with colored horse hair and porcupine quills, and his appearance was truly hideous as he twisted himself into almost impossible positions and gave his blood curdling yell. After the dancing had been going on for ten or fifteen minutes the tomtoms ceased and he retired to his place by the wall and covered his steaming body with a cotton sheet. He had probably walked a mile through the snow with the thermometer 28 degs. below zero, with only that cotton sheet to protect him from the cold. I have seen squaws walking through the snow in bare feet and carrying their moccasins and stockings in their hands. Each dance was terminated by the old dime novel war whoop, which the small boy imitates by yelling, and at the same time vibrating his hand before his mouth.

THE SQUAWS TAKE PART. Once in every hour the squaws are allowed to take part in the dancing while the bucks rest. They join hands and form a circle about their tomtom, and their dancing consists of a series of side lurches to the left, accompanied by singing. They slowly travel around the circle. Should any buck come near enough to the circle, the squaw nearest seizes his hand, and he is compelled to join the squaw dance and make his captor a present at its close.

At intervals during the dance we had noticed two squaws enter, carrying between them an iron pot slung on a pole. The pot was deposited near the stove, and the squaws disappeared only to reappear to return with other similar burdens. The contents of the pots we discovered consisted of the fresh fish. I had the curiosity to look into one of the pots, and was horrified to find it filled with a muddy liquid out of which was protruding the grinning head of a good sized dog. It had been killed by a blow on the head and thrown as it was into the pot to boil. Each guest brings with him to the dance a tin cup with which he helps himself to the soup at the proper time. At these dances the Indians even now work themselves into a perfect frenzy, and it has always been a custom with them to engage in a dance before the Indians who consider them "good medicine." But in order to be acceptable to the Indian, the feathers must have been taken from an eagle whose blood has not been spilled. In order to accomplish this, the Indian goes to a place near some eagle's nest and digs a cylindrical hole in the ground just large enough to hold him in a standing position. He carefully removes all the earth taken out, and then, placing the bodies of a few rabbits and birds around the opening, he gets into the hole, pulling over him the grass around the edges in order to hide himself as much as possible. He will remain there sometimes for days at a time, until an eagle swoops down for the bait. Then a dusky hand is thrust out of the hole, and clutches the bird's leg, and another one is soon choking him to death. —Cor. New York Sun.

AS ONE WHO WATCHETH.

Lean out against the dark with vague surmise; Shadows weigh down the world, and heavy night Gives no dim promise of a heavenly light, Yet turn, O soul! toward the east thine eyes: Nor say that day has come when faint lights creep From far off, icy pointed stars; nor dream To find thy cheer in flickering taper's gleam, Nor seek the sad forgetfulness of sleep. But watch—though darkness beat against thine eyes, Open thy casement wide—be just to mark The faintest flash that lights the awful dark; O soul! look ever toward the eastern skies! —Margaret Deland.

JENNY LIND'S BEGINNING.

A Delicate Swedish Girl's First Steps on the Road to Fame. Early in this century—1820—there was born to a poor Swedish couple a delicate, insignificant looking child. She was christened Jenny, the family name of Lind being added to the register almost as an afterthought, since it seemed hardly possible that the child would outlive its first day of baptism. Months passed; the little one lived, but could not be said to thrive. Herr Lind, the father, had a small school in Stockholm. He was assisted by his wife, who seems to have taken almost no interest in her little daughter, for as the baby grew into capacity for walking and moving about, the mother left her entirely to the care of an ignorant woman, who locked the child in a room while she went out to work.

But in the tiny, delicate frame of this baby was something which showed itself even then as a spark of the divine fire. Before she could speak plainly the child could sing—not merely catching a tune and carrying on the melody, but singing so that passers by in the street beneath the windows of the room where the child was kept under lock and key would pause to listen to the remarkable bird-like notes. Presently, when the little girl had grown to her 9th year, some one heard this marvellous trilling and vocalization, and entered the house to find out who was the songstress. There she sat, perched up in the window, cold, hungry and pinched looking, with a tiny kitten in her arms, to whom—baby that she was—she was singing in a voice like a thrush, taking every note with a hint of that dramatic finish which made her in later years magnetic to the dearest soul.

This chance inquiry may be said to have decided Jenny Lind's future. I remember her saying to me one day that she regarded all the "accidents of her childhood as peculiar and dramatic." Certainly she was not a child of the casual passer by, as Mme. Lundberg, a well known actress in Stockholm, and a woman of sufficient penetration to see that something should be done at once for and with this neglected but inspired child. Forthwith Mme. Lundberg went for Croelius, then the most advanced singing master in Europe, and taking him to the attic which held the little Nightingale, bade him prepare to be electrified. But it appears that Croelius, with one glance at the child, almost laughed aloud. Poverty, delicate health and loneliness had combined to make her so unattractive that as she stood before him he could not realize that any voice could redeem the awkward form and thin, sallow face, in which the eyes alone seemed luminous, from the first impression which they had produced. But when little Jenny sang, the first phrase seemed to strike a chord in his soul, and he could not restrain his enthusiasm.—Lucy C. Lillie in Lippincott's.

An Old Time Corn Shucking.

Corn shucking time in the south during slavery days was looked forward to by the farmer and his family as one of the big events of the year, and when the runner came around to invite all hands to a corn shucking at John Smith's, or Bill Jones', it was looked forward to by all who had been invited the same as we look forward to the coming of a circus. The negroes from different plantations within five miles of John Smith's would start to the shucking soon after they had done their day's work and housed their stock. The leader, who was generally the largest man in the crowd, would start up a song, answered by all in his party, and could be heard for miles around. They would meet at the corn pile, and the one that could halloo the loudest was elected the captain, and would walk the corn pile and give out a song until the last ear was shucked. After the shucks had been put in a pen the owner of the corn pile was carried around the house on the shoulders of several stalwart negroes, all hallooing at the same time, and carried in and put at the head of the table and waited by those who carried him on their shoulders. It was a happy time and the jug of old corn juice played a prominent part in the shucking, but it has all passed away, and the farmer who gets his corn shucked today has to pay well for it.—Athens (Ga.) Banner.

Loosing the Sense of Smell.

M. Le Bee, a French savant, declares that civilized humanity is losing the sense of smell. As compared with savage humanity, it may be said to have lost it already. The worst of it is, that M. Le Bee predicts the loss of the nose itself as a necessary consequence of its loss of functional power. The size of the present nasal appendage of one of the races that have been longest civilized encourages us to hope that M. Le Bee (the name excites suspicion is a false prophet. If he is not we will have to revise our standard of comeliness. "It may be that the civilized man of the future will see no beauty in a Greek statue unless it has lost its nose, which, it is true, is the case with most of them."—St. James' Gazette.

Leprosy in Europe.

Dr. Ernest Besnier lately made a report to the French academy upon the reappearance of leprosy in Europe. The disease, he says, has had a disquieting development in Spain, chiefly in the province of Valencia, whence large quantities of fruit and greens go to Paris and other French cities. But the disease, he maintains, can only be transmitted from man to man directly; it does not either travel by the ground or by water or air. Neither is it hereditary. The bacillus of the disease is similar to that of tuberculosis; it may even be the same species. The best means to prevent infection consists in proper attention to hygiene, cleanliness and careful diet.—Chicago News.

Over Decoration of Churches.

English religious papers are again protesting against the over decoration of churches at harvest home festivals. At a recent festival in a Lancashire church the sacred edifice was about filled with sacks of potatoes and great quantities of beets, turnips, carrots, apples, pears, tomatoes and huge vegetable marrow. Altogether it looked more like a green grocer's shop than a church.—New York Tribune.

A Pair of Red Boots.

Among the Tartars of the Ukraine boots made of red leather are generally worn. This fact gave rise to a form of torture practiced, as an act of revenge, by the landlords who formerly infested that region. The victim's skin was cut round the upper part of his legs and then torn off by the feet. Some years ago the chief of a desperate gang of robbers became so troublesome that a large reward was offered for his capture. A Russian soldier managed to secure the robber and to hand him over to his commander. Instead of being executed the robber was set at liberty. He had amassed wealth and was able to pay the commander a large sum to release him.

One day, shortly after the capture, the soldier was surprised to receive a visit from the robber chief. "You caught me once," said he to the soldier, "but before you set out upon another expedition in search of me I will give you a pair of red boots for the journey." Having uttered this terrible threat, the robber escaped. The soldier, knowing if he gave him over to the authorities he would be executed, and having no confidence in his commander's honesty, determined to take the administration of justice in his own hands. He pursued the robber, and after several days tracked him to a cave. Entering with cocked pistols in his hands, he found the robber. "You promised me," said he, "a pair of red boots; I am come to be measured for them!" and then shot the chief dead on the spot.—The Argonaut.

Disorder in Paris Theatres.

In Paris noisy demonstrations, at least in the interior of a theatre, are no longer considered good form, and they have become exceedingly rare; but in the provinces the public are very jealous of their rights, and on the slightest provocation assert them by whistling at any unfortunate actor who may happen to incur displeasure. As far back as 1673, a police ordinance undertook to put a stop to the practice by forbidding under penalty of the galleys the use of whistles and the good order of a theatrical performance. This, however, remained a dead letter, and the same may be said of the modern regulations on the subject which forbid all acts in places of amusement that in any way prevent spectators from seeing or hearing the performance. Nevertheless, to be enforced they would have to be applied against those who applaud as well as against those who hiss. Were this not done there would be a manifest contradiction in punishing a man for giving a shrill whistle which, after all, does not drown either the words of the actor or the music of the orchestra, while those who by clapping their hands, stamping with their feet, or thumping on the floor with canes and umbrellas are allowed to continue unmolested and to recommence at pleasure. In reality, applause does not interrupt a performance more than any expression of disapprobation.—Paris Cor. New Orleans Picayune.

New York Cigarette Girls.

A modern cigarette girl is nothing if not a myth. She is popularly supposed to be picturesque, gay, emotional and not unlike the lurid Ouida's sparkling heroine, who was Cigarette herself to one of her marvelous heroes. In fact, the creature of everyday life is a practical young person—often little more than a child—who sits herself down before her brown heap of shredded tobacco in the early morning and scarcely lifts either eyes or voice until the day's stint is over; often perched on a stool, and rarely over joyous, but always industrious. Of course, it naturally follows that in a class of people where girls from 10 to 15 years of age are set to work all the graces of cultivation are not to be found, and yet the actual state of morality among them is far better than that of the young ladies years ago there were any number of girls wandering about from city to city and from factory to factory, and they were sometimes of little credit to womankind. They had been up and down so many times that they got careless, and they drank and said bad words, like their bad brothers. The manufacturers took it in hand and soon weeded out the unpleasant element, getting as closely as possible to the line of faithful, honest girls.—Fannie B. Merrill in New York World.

Why They Sat Apart.

A peculiar case of boorishness is reported as occurring at the Leland Opera house the other evening. A young gentleman who had invited a young lady to attend the opera with him was unable to get consecutive seats. Nos. 21 and 25 on a certain row were the best he could get. He bought the seats, however, and explained the situation to the young lady. "Oh, it won't matter," she said, "doubtless the person who has No. 23 will readily exchange." With this in view they started out last evening, and upon arrival at the opera house found No. 23 already occupied. The owner was an early comer. But contrary to their expectations, no amount of polite persuasion could induce the occupant to move. The smile of beauty and the threats of brute force alike had no effect and our two friends took their separate seats with a final helpless protest. The occupant of No. 23 did not move once during the performance, nor go out between the acts, and strange to relate, when the audience filed out and the house was left dark and silent, No. 23 was still occupied. Drunk? Oh, no! It was always occupied by—a post.—Albany Journal.

No Tenants for Haunted Houses.

Let a house be a little damp, so that people move in and out rather frequently, and the old women in the neighborhood immediately declare the house haunted and locate there in times long past the most horrible tragedies. So common is this that it would appear every agent has three or four haunted houses on his list. House hunters seem to have all these spook infested residences on their list, and if on these houses is recommended to them as just what they want, they will say, "Oh, we saw that place. The neighbors say it's haunted and we don't want it." Nearly all will say they don't believe in ghosts themselves, but for all that they won't rent a house with a reputation of being haunted. There are several houses in St. Louis which have not been rented for as long as five years at a stretch, simply because they have the reputation of being haunted. People will bear with rats, snakes, bedbugs, anything in a house, but the possibility of there being an uneasy spirit lurking around is too much for the average renter.—Real Estate Man in Globe-Democrat.

Cleavage of Rocks.

Certain hollows in hard sandstone near Lima, Peru, were ascribed by Lyell to an ancient sea action before the rocks were elevated above ocean level. A resident observer, however, from the hollows to be still increasing in size and number, and believes them to be due to cleavage caused by the growth of lichens which live on the rocks.—Arkansas Traveler.

THE CROWN PRINCE'S VICTORY.

How the Prussian Forces Defeated the Austrians in the War of 1860.

On the 23d of June Prince Frederick Charles crossed the Austrian frontier, and six days later he was joined by the Army of the E. B. They were at Gitschin. On his left the crown prince, with his army, was at Koenigsinhof, a day's march away, while the Austrians had retired in Koenigsgratz, ready for battle. But the plan of attack was very simple. Prince Frederick Charles, with his three corps, was to assault Boneleek with his five, while Bittenfeld was to fall upon the left flank of the Austrians and the crown prince attack their right. But the crown prince was twenty-five miles away, and it was 4 in the morning before Col. von Frankenstein, after a terrible ride, arrived at the crown prince's headquarters with the king's command to join Prince Frederick Charles.

The battle began at 8 o'clock in the morning, the king, Moltke and Bismarck being on the field. The needle gun worked terrible havoc among the devoted battalions of Austria, but their ground and fire for a long time the scales of battle hung pretty evenly. For a time it seemed indeed as if victory would rest on the standards of the Hapsburgs, and the Prussians looked for the coming of the crown prince as eagerly as Wellington had once looked for the coming of Blucher.

"Want to God the crown prince would come!" Suddenly Bismarck lowered his glasses and drew attention to certain lines in the distance. All telescopes were pointed thither. At first the lines were pronounced to be furrows. "They are not furrows," said Bismarck, "the spaces are not equal; they are advancing lines." It was the crown prince's army, that had been delayed by the condition of the roads, which the rains had made all but impassable. Only twenty-five miles, but it took the army nine hours to do the distance, and the crown prince lost 25 per cent. of his men through exhaustion by the way. The crown prince lost not a moment in getting his forces into action. Violently assaulted on both flanks, and fiercely pressed in the center, the Austrians began to slacken their fire, to give way, and then to retreat. The battle was won, and the honors of having decided it were the crown prince's. Bismarck himself admits how critical was the situation of the Prussians at one point of the battle.—Globe-Democrat.

A Duel with Chief Left Hand.

Duels were as common in the west in those days as in the south, and the following story is told of Jim Baker challenging Left Hand, the great war chief of the Arapahoes. He was known by that name by the whites as it was remarkable to see an Indian who was so hands. His Indian name was Ni-Wot. A mountain stream and little postoffice near Denver bear the name Ni-Wot, in honor of the old warrior. It was early in the sixties, when Jim Baker was living on Clear creek, that he had excited the animosity and hatred of Left Hand. On one occasion Left Hand and a party of his tribe camped near Jim Baker's cabin. Believing that they were bent on mischief and that his old enemy intended to make war on him, Baker, with rifle in hand, went alone to Left Hand's camp. The Indians were amazed to see Baker enter their camp alone, and much more so when they saw him walk up to Left Hand and say: "In Left Hand, the great chief and warrior of the Arapahoes, here for peace or war?"

The chief, startled by the cry and also the abrupt questions of the speaker, hesitated a moment.

"Which is my Indian brother wants?" again said Baker.

"Paleface no friend of Arapahoes," replied Left Hand, "shaking his rifle defiantly. He shoot rifle like Kit Carson, but Left Hand no afraid."

Angry words followed, and Left Hand shouted out:

"Me heap great warrior Arapahoes; mad at paleface. Left Hand come to fight, and fight now," shaking his rifle defiantly.

"Fight with rifles," asked Baker.

"Left Hand no afraid paleface rifle; fight with rifle hundred yards."

"Left Hand has spoken like a warrior and I will fight," replied Baker, for he knew that he was more than a match for any Indian with his rifle, and although the only white in or near the Indian camp, he feared them not.

The hundred yards were stepped off, and Baker and Left Hand took their places; but before either had fired a shot the Indians interfered and put an end to the intended duel. Baker then threw his rifle over his shoulder and returned to his cabin, and was never afterwards molested by Left Hand.—Denver Cor. New York World.

In Regard to Explosives.

The prevailing opinions in regard to explosives are, in the main, incorrect. The statement that the main force of a dynamite explosion is downward will go uncontradicted in almost any company that has not given explosives special attention. But, in fact, there is no shooting upward or downward or edgewise with one explosive more than with another. They all explode alike, and the variety of effect is caused by the difference in their power—that is, the rapidity with which they explode. The explosive power of powder, which, of all explosives, is best understood, is about 40,000 pounds to the square inch, and other explosives are measured as being a given number of times stronger or weaker than powder. The force of that explosive is generally believed to be upward, when, in fact, it is equal in all directions. But it burns slow enough to allow the air to get out of the way.

Dynamite, on the other hand, explodes so rapid in time that the air cannot be displaced to prevent its force downward being much greater in proportion than that of powder. It is because dynamite will break a stone beneath it that the people think its greatest power is in that direction. To prove that it is not, suspend a large stone in the air and suspend the dynamite explosive as measured as being a given number of times stronger or weaker than powder. The force of that explosive is generally believed to be upward, when, in fact, it is equal in all directions. But it burns slow enough to allow the air to get out of the way.

The work of destruction will be as complete as though the stone had been underneath.

Sun and Fire Symbols.

There are to be found occasionally upon the walls and other excesses, at about the line division between the lines and figures, flat pieces of iron five or six inches in length, and shaped somewhat like the letter S. The use of these articles was clearly brought from England, where it is still continued, and a writer gives a curious account of its origin and meaning. The writer says that the figure in question is an early symbol of the sun. It is still used in Herefordshire and other parts of England. He once asked an old servant of the family—a Gloucestershire man—the reason for the particular form of these irons, and the reply was that "they were made thus in order to prevent the house from fire as well as from falling down."

If one will examine into the antiquities of the Isle of Man, he will find the seal of the government shows a curious combination of this figure. The same was on the official seal of Sicily. We can trace its use to the oldest countries of Asia, but its origin was earlier than history gives any record.—Nature.

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