

rain, the first of which brings on a mist or cloud, the second a snowfall, the third a shower, and the fourth a hard rain or storm, while when he sings the fifth song the weather again becomes clear.

I knew that he was holding something in reserve, as no Indian would unbosom himself on religious matters to a white man with whom he had not had a long and intimate acquaintance. Especially was this true in view of the warlike turn affairs had taken across the mountains. Consequently I accepted his statements with several grains of salt, but on the whole he seemed to be honest in his belief and his supernatural claims, although, like others of the priestly function, he occasionally resorts to cheap trickery to keep up the impression as to his miraculous powers. From some of the reports he is evidently an expert sleight-of-hand performer. He makes no claim to be Christ, the Son of God, as has been so often asserted in print. He does claim to be a prophet who has received a divine revelation. I could not help feeling that he was sincere in his repudiation of a number of the wonderful things attributed to him, for the reason that he insisted so strongly on other things fully as trying to the faith of a white man. He made no argument and advanced no proofs, but said simply that he had been with God, as though the statement no more admitted of controversy than the proposition that 2 and 2 are 4. From Mr J. O. Gregory, formerly employed at the agency, and well acquainted with the prophet, I learned that Wovoka had once requested him to draw up and forward to the President a statement of his supernatural claims, with a proposition that if he could receive a small regular stipend he would take up his residence on the reservation and agree to keep Nevada people informed of all the latest news from heaven and to furnish rain whenever wanted. The letter was never forwarded.

From a neighboring ranchman, who knew Wovoka well and sometimes employed him in the working season, I obtained a statement which seems to explain the whole matter. It appears that a short time before the prophet began to preach he was stricken down by a severe fever, during which illness the ranchman frequently visited and ministered to him. While he was still sick there occurred an eclipse of the sun, a phenomenon which always excites great alarm among primitive peoples. In their system the sun is a living being, of great power and beneficence, and the temporary darkness is caused by an attack on him by some supernatural monster which endeavors to devour him, and will succeed, and thus plunge the world into eternal night unless driven off by incantations and loud noises. On this occasion the Paiute were frantic with excitement and the air was filled with the noise of shouts and wailings and the firing of guns, for the purpose of frightening off the monster that threatened the life of their god. It was now, as Wovoka stated, "when the sun died," that he went to sleep in the daytime and was taken up to heaven. This means simply that the excitement and alarm produced by the eclipse, acting on a mind and body

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