

continuing for five consecutive days. The Caddo and Wichita also adopted the new rule in agreement with instructions brought back by a delegation sent out about the same time. The change was opposed by Sitting Bull and some others, but the delegates, having the authority of the messiah for the innovation, succeeded in carrying their point, and thereafter assumed a leadership on equal terms with Sitting Bull, who from that time lost much of his interest in the dance. They were gone about two weeks, and brought back with them a quantity of the sacred paint and a large number of magpie feathers, the kind commonly worn by the Paiute in the Ghost dance. This started a demand for magpie feathers, and the shrewd traders soon turned the fact to their own advantage by importing selected crow feathers, which they sold to the unsuspecting Indians for the genuine article at the rate of two feathers for a quarter. While in the land of the Paiute the delegates took part in the Ghost dance at Mason valley, and were thrown into a trance by Wovoka, as related in chapter IX.

The Ghost dance practically superseded all other dances among the Cheyenne and Arapaho, and constantly developed new features, notably the auxiliary "crow dance," which was organized by Grant Left Hand. This was claimed as a dance seen in a trance vision of the spirit world, but is really only a modification of the "Omaha dance," common to the northern prairie tribes. The opening of the reservation and the influx of the whites served to intensify the religious fervor of the Indians, who were now more than ever made to feel their dependent and helpless condition. It was impossible, however, that the intense mental strain could endure forever, and after the failure of the predictions on the appointed dates the wild excitement gradually cooled and crystallized into a fixed but tranquil expectation of ultimate happiness under the old conditions in another world.

In October, 1892, another delegation, consisting of Sitting Bull and his wife, with Washee and two other Arapaho, and Edward Guerrier, a half-blood Cheyenne, visited the messiah. They brought back a very discouraging report, which was in substance that the messiah was tired of so many visitors and wanted them to go home and tell their tribes to stop dancing. Although the Indians generally refused to accept the message as genuine, the effect was naturally depressing. A year later, in October, 1893, Black Coyote and several others dictated through me a letter to Wovoka, asking him to send them some of the sacred paint or anything else that would make them think of him, with "some good words to help us and our children," and requesting to know whether he had been truthfully reported by the delegates of the preceding year. To one who knows these people their simple religious faith is too touching to be a subject of amusement.

The messiah doctrine never gained many converts among the Comanche, excepting those of the Penātē/ka division and a few others living

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