

source of his prophetic and clairvoyant inspiration. The buffalo horn was "God's heart," the red feathers contained his own heart, and the circle of claws represented the world. When he prayed for help, his heart communed with "God's heart," and he learned what he wished to know. He had much to say also of the moon. Sometimes in his trances he went to the moon and the moon taught him secrets. It must be remembered that sun, moon, stars, and almost every other thing in nature are considered by the Indians as endowed with life and spirit. He claimed an intimate acquaintance with the other world and asserted positively that he could tell me "just what heaven is like." Another man who accompanied him had a yellow sun with green rays painted on his forehead, with an elaborate rayed crescent in green, red, and yellow on his chin, and wore a necklace from which depended a crucifix and a brass clock-wheel, the latter, as he stated, representing the sun.

On entering the room where I sat awaiting him, Nishkû'ntû approached and performed mystic passes in front of my face with his hands, after the manner of the hypnotist priests in the Ghost dance, blowing upon me the while, as he afterward explained to blow evil things away from me before beginning to talk on religious subjects. He was good enough to state also that he had prayed for light before coming, and had found that my heart was good. Laying one hand on my head, and grasping my own hand with the other, he prayed silently for some time with bowed head, and then lifting his hand from my head, he passed it over my face, down my shoulder and arm to the hand, which he grasped and pressed slightly, and then released the fingers with a graceful upward sweep, as in the minuet. The first part of this—the laying of the hands upon the head, afterward drawing them down along the face and chest or arms—is the regular Indian form of blessing, reverential gratitude, or prayerful entreaty, and is of frequent occurrence in connection with the Ghost dance, when the believers ask help of the priests or beg the prayers of the older people. The next day about twenty or more Caddo came by on their way to the agency, all dressed and painted for a dance that was to be held that night. They stopped awhile to see us, and on entering the room where we were the whole company, men, women, and children, went through the same ceremony, with each one of the inmates in turn, beginning with Wilson and myself, and ending with the members of the family. The ceremony occupied a considerable time, and was at once beautiful and impressive. Not a word was said by either party during the while, excepting as someone in excess of devotion would utter prayerful exclamations aloud like the undertone of a litany. Every face wore a look of reverent solemnity, from the old men and women down to little children of 6 and 8 years. Several of them, the women especially, trembled while praying, as under the excitement of the Ghost dance. The religious greeting being over, the women of the family, with those of the party, went out to prepare the dinner, while the rest remained to listen to the doctrinal discussion.

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