

these two tribes, it deserves no extended notice in this connection. Although claimed by its inventors as a direct inspiration from the other world, where they saw it performed by "crows," or spirits of departed friends, it is really only a modification of the picturesque Omaha dance of the prairie tribes, with the addition of religious features borrowed from the new doctrine. The men participating are stripped to the breechcloth, with their whole bodies painted as in the Omaha dance, and wear elaborate pendants of varicolored feathers hanging down behind from the waist. An immense drum is an important feature. Men and women take part, and the songs refer to the general subject of the crow and the messiah, but are set to a variety of dance steps and evolutions performed by the dancers. As the leaders, who are chiefly young men, are constantly studying new features, the crow dance has become one of the most attractive ceremonies among the prairie tribes. Hypnotism and trances form an essential feature of this as of the Ghost dance proper. (See plate CXIX.)

THE HYPNOTIC PROCESS

The most important feature of the Ghost dance, and the secret of the trances, is hypnotism. It has been hastily assumed that hypnotic knowledge and ability belong only to an overripe civilization, such as that of India and ancient Egypt, or to the most modern period of scientific investigation. The fact is, however, that practical knowledge, if not understanding, of such things belongs to people who live near to nature, and many of the stories told by reliable travelers of the strange performances of savage shamans can be explained only on this theory. Numerous references in the works of the early Jesuit missionaries, of the Puritan writers of New England and of English explorers farther to the south, would indicate that hypnotic ability no less than sleight-of-hand dexterity formed part of the medicine-man's equipment from the Saint Lawrence to the Gulf. Enough has been said in the chapters on Smoholla and the Shakers to show that hypnotism exists among the tribes of the Columbia, and the author has had frequent opportunity to observe and study it in the Ghost dance on the plains. It can not be said that the Indian priests understand the phenomenon, for they ascribe it to a supernatural cause, but they know how to produce the effect, as I have witnessed hundreds of times. In treating of the subject in connection with the Ghost dance the author must be understood as speaking from the point of view of an observer and not as a psychologic expert. ok

Immediately on coming among the Arapaho and Cheyenne in 1890, I heard numerous stories of wonderful things that occurred in the Ghost dance—how people died, went to heaven and came back again, and how they talked with dead friends and brought back messages from the other world. Quite a number who had thus "died" were mentioned and their adventures in the spirit land were related with great particularity of