

Translation

Little boy, the coyote gun—
 Little boy, the coyote gun—
 I have uncovered it— *Ahe'e'ye'!*
 I have uncovered it— *Ahe'e'ye'!*
 There is the sheath lying there,
 There is the sheath lying there.

This song was composed by Nakash, or "Sage," one of the northern Arapaho delegates to the messiah. It evidently refers to one of his trance experiences in the other world, and has to do with an interesting feature in the sociology of the Arapaho and other prairie tribes. The *ga'ahinē'na* or *gaahi'na*, "coyote men," were an order of men of middle age who acted as pickets or lookouts for the camp. When the band encamped in some convenient situation for hunting or other business, it was the duty of these men, usually four or six in a band, to take their stations on the nearest hills to keep watch and give timely warning in case of the approach of an enemy. It was an office of danger and responsibility, but was held in corresponding respect. When on duty, the *gaahi'nēn* wore a white buffalo robe and had his face painted with white clay and carried in his hand the *ya'haga'ahi'na* or "coyote gun," a club decorated with feathers and other ornaments and usually covered with a sheath of bear gut (*i'tha'q*). He must be unmarried and remain so while in office, finally choosing his own successor and delivering to him the "coyote gun" as a staff of authority. They were never all off duty at the same time, but at least half were always on guard, one or more coming down at a time to the village to eat or sleep. They built no shelter on the hills, but slept there in their buffalo robes, or sometimes came down in turn and slept in their own tipis. They usually, however, preferred to sleep alone upon the hills in order to receive inspiration in dreams. If attacked or surprised by the enemy, they were expected to fight. The watcher was sometimes called *higa'ahi'na-it*, "the man with the coyote gun." The corresponding officer among the Cheyenne carried a bow and arrows instead of a club.

42. HE'SŪNA' NA'NAHATHA'HI

He'sūna' na'nahatha'hi,
 He'sūna' na'nahatha'hi.
 Nī'itu'qawigū'niē',
 Nī'itu'qawigū'niē'.

Translation

The father showed me,
 The father showed me,
 Where they were coming down,
 Where they were coming down.

In his trance vision the author of this song saw the spirit hosts descending from the upper shadow land to the earth, along the mountain