

to the lodge, (the usual method of estimating Indian populations), would give over three thousand six hundred as the number gathered there on that occasion. All of the Kiowas, the Indian Territory Apaches, and numbers of Cheyennes, Arapahoes, Comanches and Wichitas having been drawn together in order to be present at the great annual medicine making of the Kiowas. The camp was situated in a beautiful valley, through which flows a small stream of water, called by the Kiowas You-gwoo-o-poh, (Rice Creek) in what is now the eastern part of Gray Co. Texas.

On approaching the camp a long narrow enclosure was noticed, composed of cottonwood saplings stuck in the ground in parallel rows, for the sides, the leaves of which were still fresh and green, while the top was covered with muslin.

To this enclosure Thomisy was directed by a messenger sent to meet them before reaching the camp. In this structure were assembled all the chiefs and war-chiefs of the Kiowa and Apache tribes, most of those of the Cheyennes and Arapahoes, and many of the Comanche chiefs, to the number of over one hundred. On entering this enclosure Thomisy found the pipe circulating among them. Beyond the customary salutation and motioning him to a place in which to be seated nothing was said to him until the pipe was exhausted. He noticed that every one present took the pipe while passing. This among Indians is understood to be a pledge of friendship and alliance.

Immediately after the pipe was laid by, food, consisting of boiled meat, bread and coffee, was placed before Thomisy. Hunger is a good appetizer, and since he had not partaken of any refreshment since the evening before, and it being now three hours past noon, he was prepared to do ample justice to whatever was set before him.

"What news from Washington?" asked the great Medicine Chief, (High Priest of the tribe), when the dinner things had been withdrawn.

The situation of our message bearer at this time, may be more easily imagined than described, alone among savages—afar from civilized men—the bearer of an unwelcome message—with no outward dependency for protection—entirely dependent upon them for subsistence, and the means of returning to civilized life, if such return were even permitted.

In the absence of any more reliable reporters perhaps we can do no better than to let Thomisy tell the story of the Council himself.

"After a short pause, in which I endeavored to seek wisdom and ability in this hour of deep trial and to feel my confidence somewhat renewed in that unfailing Arm of Power, that holds in its fold the destinies of men and of nations, I replied 'Bad News.'

The Medicine Chief then proceeded with the utmost solemnity, and the most imposing formality

to refill the pipe. After the proper ceremonies and offerings had been made by him, to the Sun and the Earth—the Father and the Mother—the lighted pipe was passed to the chief sitting at the extreme end of the council lodge on the right side, who was the first after the Medicine Chief to apply it to his lips, he, after devoutly making his medicine and taking two or three whiffs, passes it to his nearest left hand neighbor. Thus the pipe circulates from the right toward the left, from mouth to mouth, each in turn offering to the Sun and the Earth, after his own manner of medicine making, as it is handed to him. At the proper point it was handed to me. I took it with becoming gravity, and filling my mouth with smoke passed it to Kicking Bird my nearest left hand neighbor.

The pipe continued to circulate in utter silence until it ceased to yield smoke, it was then taken apart, and laid on the ground by the side of the Medicine Chief, who then turning to me said 'You say Bad News, what is it?'

With these people, it is not considered a mark of wisdom to answer at once, all important questions are duly reflected upon before an answer is given. I sat in silence—every eye was upon me—the time had come for the delivery of my message. After a short pause I answered, 'Washington's heart has suddenly become cold and hard toward the Kiowas—he has shut his hand upon your two chiefs—he holds them still in prison in Texas.'

'Why has Washington's heart become so suddenly cold?' was asked. I explained the 'Tragedy of the Lava Beds,' saying the Modocs have killed two of his 'Big Chiefs'—one big war chief, and one big medicine chief, Washington's heart become very cold toward all his red children.

The whole assembly sat in entire silence for some time perhaps fifteen or twenty minutes; then commenced a discussion as to what they should now do. Washington had without cause from them violated his agreement, the chain that held them was now broken and they were no longer bound by it. 'What if the Modocs have done bad? We knew nothing of them; never before heard of them. Washington acts as though we were enemies, while we are following the very road he made for us.' Little Robe—Satanta's brother—was violent in speech and gesture and had to be moderated by his chief, who explained to me 'He Pappoose.'

A stormy council followed, I never witnessed so exciting a discussion among Indians. Kicking-Bird was openly censured, for having advocated a policy of peace in order to secure their release.

Some of the war chiefs were so far forgetful of the dignity of the occasion, as to arise to their feet and use violent gestures while speaking. When

the excitement rose too high the Medicine Chief (who preserved his composure) would quiet it by commencing to refill the pipe.

The storm-cloud continued to darken. All present had taken the pipe. One thousand or more warriors could be put into the field by the allied tribes. The sentiment prevailed, to go on with the Dance—make War Medicine, then divide the whole allied force of warriors into small raiding squads, of fifteen or twenty, send them secretly to the vicinity of the white settlements, to await a specified time, so as to make a simultaneous attack along the whole line of Kansas, Colorado New Mexico and Texas.

In the meantime, while the warriors were going to their several places of destination, the old men, women and children, having me in charge as hostage until their chiefs should be returned, or to assist in making peace when the campaign was over, should go to a place of safety near the center of the Staked Plains, where they claimed was a place of concealment, of which white people have no knowledge.

Kicking Bird had not yet spoken. Satanta's father said:—'Kicking Bird, why you no talk? you sit there like old woman, and say nothing?'

Indignantly repelling the taunt, Kicking Bird with a calm and subdued voice, though his chin quivered with emotion, replied 'I expect to talk; I am not yet ready. There is one other man present who has not spoken; I want to hear from Thomisy. He is one of us; he has taken the pipe: he knows Washington has broken his agreement; I want to hear what he will say now. The 'Ugh' of approbation went around the assembly, then all was still. Silence reigned!

The pipe was again filled and lighted with unequal solemnity, and being circulated, was again passed to me. Again I gravely took it, under the keen searching eye of every one present, and filling my mouth with smoke passed it on.

After the contents of the pipe were exhausted, I was addressed by the Medicine Chief after this manner; 'You was present when Washington made the agreement by which our chiefs were to be returned to us. You saw him hold up his right hand before the Great Spirit when he promised it. You know the Kiowas have fulfilled their part of the agreement. You have yourself brought us the message that Washington has closed his hand upon them. Now what council do you give?'

Was ever man placed in such a situation? It might be thought that a man holding 'Peace' principles in reality, could easily counsel against war and bloodshed; and so he might; but to do it in a manner to have the greatest effect upon an assemblage of exasperated men requires a wisdom beyond that of man, especially where those men are totally ignorant of the sublime principles of

Peace and Love, and know no other law than that of revenge and retaliation.

I felt that the question was one of life or death to many, myself included; yet all was dark, no light shone upon me, not a word presented to utter.

Deep silence settled upon the council. A silence which, as seemed to me could be felt. How long it continued I know not. I felt the need of that wisdom which is from above, and strove to draw near to the source of it. I endeavored to collect myself and seek ability to exert myself for the right.

At length light dawned. An answer was given me, and I replied, 'I have understood the words of Tohaint, (the Kiowa name of the Medicine Chief meaning No Shoes.) It is hard for me to give advice for two reasons; the first is, I am as you see a white man; the second is I am a Kiowa, I am one with you. You are my brothers. I can give you no advice but this, Do nothing suddenly or rashly. Be deliberate and cool; but I have one request to make of you, after I tell you why I make it. When Washington's message first came and I had read it, I wrote a long talk to him. I told him Kiowas do right; have done all he required of them to do,—have given up stolen mules—all that they can find—have not raided in Texas—have kept other Indians from raiding—have fulfilled all their part of the agreement, and are anxiously awaiting the fulfillment of his. Now my request is this; Sit down here, where we are, neither go to the Agency nor go off raiding; sit here until you hear from Washington after he read my talk. Washington very angry when he hear that two of his 'big chiefs' killed. Angry men are not always wise, and seldom do right—many times do wrong. Washington shut hand very quick—no take time to think. By and by he will not be so angry. By and by he see my talk—may be he will remember his promise—may be his heart get softer and warmer. May be he will open his hand again. I ask you to sit still until you hear from Washington again.'

Kicking Bird was then ready with his talk. He counseled them not to act rashly, or in anger. He told them my request was reasonable, that they could see I had been working for them when my back was toward them, and they could not see my face. He wanted them to act like wise men, to be deliberate, not do like Washington get in a hurry; there was time enough. Nothing would be lost by waiting, and much might be gained. He thought it better to do as I had said, Sit still until we hear from Washington again.

Strange as it may appear, this course prevailed. The pipe was again taken. Thomisy's request was acceded too. The storm was averted for the present, and the council settled down to a calm conclusion to wait there until another message should be received, and ended quietly.

The Great Medicine Dance followed, but war medicine was not made. After several days a message from the Agent was received containing information from Washington that "all necessary measures were being taken by the Department" to secure the release of the chiefs. Some time after Satanta and Big Tree were transferred to Ft. Sill on the Kiowa and Comanche Reservation, and were ultimately released on parole and given back to the tribe. But of that hereafter.