

The duties of the young woman were to hitch and un-hitch the horse she was permitted to ride, so that the brave with whom she rode could maintain his dignity without dismounting. This business continued through the day, except for an hour or two in the middle of the afternoon, when the old women — the grandmothers of the tribe — had a dance.

The music consisted of singing and drumming, done by several old women, who were squatted on the ground in a circle. The dancers — old, gray-headed women, from sixty to eighty years of age — performed in a circle around them for some time, finally striking off upon a waddling run, one behind another; they formed a circle, came back, and, doubling so as to bring two together, threw their arms around each other's necks, and trudged around for some time longer; then sat down, while a youngish man circulated the pipe, from which each in turn took two or three whiffs, and this ceremony ended.

18th. — Work at the medicine house drew to a close.

The large trees and brush were all hauled by the middle of the forenoon. The putting up of the long cottonwood poles, to support the covering, was work requiring strength to perform. They were thirty-five or forty feet in length, green and heavy, and required a great amount of noisy talking, loud hallooing, and hard lifting to get them to their places. This being done, and the brush thrown over them for a shade, the medicine house was completed about noon — the side shade having been previously put up.

The soldiers of the tribe then had a frolic in and about it, running and jumping, striking and kicking, throwing one another down, stripping and tearing the clothes off each other. One tall Indian clasped me around for a back-hold wrestle; but, though I did not attempt to throw him, by exerting my little strength in the right direction, he found it too much resembling work to lay me on the ground, to suit his ideas of dignity, and so gave it up.

Before this frolic was over, a party of ten or twelve warriors appeared, moving a kind of shield to and fro before their bodies, making, in some manner (as I was not near enough to see how it was done), a grating sound, not unlike the filing of a mill-saw.

The medicine house is situated nearly in the centre of the encampment, is circular in form, and about sixty feet in diameter, having its entrance towards the east. It is built by erecting a forked post, twenty feet high perhaps, for a central support. Around this, and at nearly equal distances, are seventeen other forked posts, forming the circumference of the building.

These are from twelve to fifteen feet in height, and all of cottonwood. Small cottonwood trees are tied on the outside of these, in a horizontal position, with ropes of raw hide, limbs and leaves all on them. Outside of these, small cottonwood trees are placed in an upright position, thus forming a wall of green trees and leaves several feet in thickness, in the midst of which many hundred spectators afterwards found a cool retreat, where they