

over his body, filling his hair with dust and dirt. This is his war medicine. He then rushes to the combat. Sometimes both are killed, sometimes one; oftener one gives up conquered, and slowly limps away, while the conqueror triumphantly leads away both herds. The Kiowa learns his war medicine from the buffalo. After discovering his enemy, he stops, re-covers his body with war-paint, which he carries about his person, and which he has not bought from a trader, but dug from the earth.

The earth is the mother, not only of men, but of animals. The mother is the natural protector of the young. The buffalo, by loosening the dirt with his horns, and the Kiowa by digging his war-paint, calls the attention of his mother to her child; and, by covering himself with some of her elements, clothes himself for the battle with her spirit and power. Such is the regard of the Kiowa for the earth, that, as they have repeatedly told me, no one of them will kill a person while he is digging in it. He will attract his attention in some manner, and having made his own medicine, cause him to cease digging and to look up. When he looks up his medicine is made, and they are on even footing for the contest.

A round ball is sometimes found in the stomach of a buffalo, which, after being removed, becomes hard, and resembles, except in weight, a smooth round stone: this, whatever its origin, is regarded by the Indians as his medicine of life. Their idea is, that it renders it very difficult, if not entirely impossible, to kill him. A buffalo is sometimes pierced through and through with arrows or bullets, and still has strength to fight furiously in his own defence. If, however, he is overcome and vanquished, his stomach is searched thoroughly for this remarkable stone, as they call it, which the Indians

suppose he has swallowed. If one is found, it is taken possession of, not only to attest the power of the man who has it, but also to render him invincible in battle. I have seen these medicine stones three inches in diameter.

The Comanches regard the wolf as a brother, who many times evinces the warmth of his brotherly affection by warning them of impending evil. In their journeys, should a wolf spring up before them, look at them, and bark, or howl, as he sometimes does, they will turn their course, and travel no farther in that direction on that day. The wolf has warned them of danger, and they must heed the warning. As it was not my design to make a treatise of their superstitions, perhaps what has been written in this respect will be sufficient to render intelligible their ideas of religion, and what is meant by the use of the word "medicine."

The Indian has been described as being grave and brave, possessing a lofty independence of character, and a stoical insensibility to pain. Without here speaking of the other qualities of his nature, so far as my acquaintance and observation extend, the Indians of the southwest, while they may be grave in important councils, are sociable, lively, and even jovial in conversation, and as much enjoy a joke as any class of people I was ever among, provided it does not cut their pride too closely, and are as capable of turning their wit to their own account. While I do not intend to reproduce much that has passed before me in proof of this position, I propose to introduce a few anecdotes illustrative of their superstitious notions, and the peculiar humorousness of their character.