

divine message, talking five days in succession. The report aroused the wildest excitement among the Cheyenne, and after several long debates on the subject the Ghost dance was inaugurated at the various camps in accordance with the instructions from beyond the mountains. In June the matter came to the attention of the military officer on the reservation, who summoned Porcupine before him and obtained from him a full account of the journey and the doctrine. (See page 793.) Porcupine insisted strongly on the sacred character of the messiah and his message, and challenged any doubters to return with him to Nevada and investigate for themselves. He claimed also that the messiah could speak all languages. As a matter of fact, Wovoka speaks only his native Paiute and a little English, but due allowance must be made for the mental exaltation of the narrator.

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Grinnell states that the failure of certain things to happen according to the predictions of the messiah, in September, 1890, caused a temporary loss of faith on the part of the Cheyenne, but that shortly afterward some visiting Shoshoni and Arapaho from Wyoming reported that in their journey as they came over they had met a party of Indians who had been dead thirty or forty years, but had been resurrected by the messiah, and were now going about as if they had never died. It is useless to speculate on the mental condition of men who could seriously report or believe such things; but, however that may be, the result was that the Cheyenne returned to the dance with redoubled fervor. (J. F. L., 5.)

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The Sioux first heard of the messiah in 1889. According to the statement of Captain George Sword, of that tribe, the information came to the Ogalala (Sioux of Pine Ridge) in that year, through the Shoshoni and Arapaho. Later in the same year a delegation consisting of Good Thunder and several others started out to the west to find the messiah and to investigate the truth of the rumor. On their return they announced that the messiah had indeed come to help the Indians, but not the whites. Their report aroused a fervor of joyful excitement among the Indians and a second delegation was sent out in 1890, consisting of Good Thunder, Cloud Horse, Yellow Knife, and Short Bull. They confirmed the report of the first delegation, and on this assurance the Ghost dance was inaugurated among the Sioux at Pine Ridge in the spring of 1890.

(6)

act-2

Wovoka

The matter is stated differently and more correctly by William Selwyn, an educated Sioux, at that time employed as postmaster at Pine Ridge. He says there was some talk on the subject by Indians from western tribes who visited the agency in the fall of 1888 (?), but that it did not excite much attention until 1889, when numerous letters concerning the new messiah were received by the Indians at Pine Ridge from tribes in Utah, Wyoming, Montana, Dakota, and Oklahoma. As Selwyn was postmaster, the Indians who could not read usually brought their letters to him to read for them, so that he was thus in