

tight to close every opening, and he sits in this aboriginal Turkish bath until his naked body is dripping with perspiration. During this time the doctors outside are doing their part in the way of praying to the gods and keeping up the supply of hot stones and water until in their estimation he has been sufficiently purified, physically or morally, when he emerges and resumes his clothing, sometimes first checking the perspiration and inducing a reaction by a plunge into the neighboring stream. The sweat bath in one form or another was common to almost every tribe in the United States, but as an accompaniment to the Ghost dance it seems to have been used only by the Sioux. It may have been used in this connection among the Shoshoni or northern Cheyenne, but was not among any of the tribes of the southern plains. The Ghost-dance sweat-house of the Sioux was frequently made sufficiently large to accommodate a considerable number of persons standing inside at the same time.

After the sweating ceremony the dancer was painted by the medicine-men who acted as leaders, of whom Sitting Bull was accounted the greatest among the Sioux. The design and color varied with the individual, being frequently determined by a previous trance vision of the subject, but circles, crescents, and crosses, representing respectively the sun, the moon, and the morning star, were always favorite figures upon forehead, face, and cheeks. As this was not a naked dance, the rest of the body was not usually painted. After the painting the dancer was robed in the sacred ghost shirt already described. This also was painted with symbolic figures, among which were usually represented sun, moon, or stars, the eagle, magpie, crow, or sage-hen, all sacred to the Ghost dance among the Sioux. In connection with the painting the face and body were rubbed with the sweet-smelling vernal grass (*Hierochloa*), used for this purpose by many of the prairie tribes, and sometimes also burned as incense in their sacred ceremonies or carried as a perfume in small pouches attached to the clothing.

The painting occupied most of the morning, so that it was about noon before the participants formed the circle for the dance. Among the Sioux, unlike the southern and western tribes generally, a small tree was planted in the center of the circle, with an American flag or colored streamers floating from the top. Around the base of this tree sat the priests. At a great dance at No Water's camp on White river near Pine Ridge, shortly before the arrival of the troops, a young woman standing within the circle gave the signal for the performance by shooting into the air toward the cardinal points four sacred arrows, made after the old primitive fashion with bone heads, and dipped in the blood of a steer before being brought to the dance. These were then gathered up and tied to the branches of the tree, together with the bow, a gaming wheel and sticks, and a peculiar staff or wand with horns. (See plates XC, XCI.) Another young woman, or the same one, remained standing near the tree throughout the dance, holding a sacred redstone pipe

net 2

net 2

net 3

sweetgrass

net 2 -  
doctor of the Sioux