

THE SONGS

INTRODUCTORY

The Ghost-dance songs are of the utmost importance in connection with the study of the messiah religion, as we find embodied in them much of the doctrine itself, with more of the special tribal mythologies, together with such innumerable references to old-time customs, ceremonies, and modes of life long since obsolete as make up a regular symposium of aboriginal thought and practice. There is no limit to the number of these songs, as every trance at every dance produces a new one, the trance subject after regaining consciousness embodying his experience in the spirit world in the form of a song, which is sung at the next dance and succeeding performances until superseded by other songs originating in the same way. Thus, a single dance may easily result in twenty or thirty new songs. While songs are thus born and die, certain ones which appeal especially to the Indian heart, on account of their mythology, pathos, or peculiar sweetness, live and are perpetuated. There are also with each tribe certain songs which are a regular part of the ceremonial, as the opening song and the closing song, which are repeated at every dance. Of these the closing song is the most important and permanent. In some cases certain songs constitute a regular series, detailing the experiences of the same person in successive trance visions. First in importance, for number, richness of reference, beauty of sentiment, and rhythm of language, are the songs of the Arapaho.

THE ARAPAHO

TRIBAL SYNONYMY

Ähyä'to—Kiowa name; meaning unknown; the Kiowa call the wild plum by the same name.

Ano's-anyotskano—Kichai name.

Ärä'päho—popular name; derivation uncertain; but, perhaps, as Dunbar suggests, from the Pawnee word *tirapihu* or *larapihu*, "he buys or trades," in allusion to the Arapaho having formerly been the trading medium between the Pawnee, Osage, and others on the north, and the Kiowa, Comanche, and others to the southwest (*Grinnell letter*).

Äräpäkata—Crow name, from word Arapaho.

Bétidëë—Kiowa Apache name.

Detsëka'yaa—Caddo name, "dog eaters."

Hitänüw'iv—Cheyenne name, "cloud men."

Inäna-ina—proper tribal name, "our people," or "people of our kind."

Kaninahöc or *Kaninä'vish*—Ojibwa name; meaning unknown.