

people tell how a hunter once shot and wounded a large bird which fell to the ground. Being afraid to attack it alone on account of its size, he returned to camp for help, but on again approaching the spot the hunters heard the thunder rolling and saw flashes of lightning shooting out from the ravine where the bird lay wounded. On coming nearer, the lightning blinded them so that they could not see the bird, and one flash struck and killed a hunter. His frightened companions then fled back to camp, for they knew it was the Thunderbird.

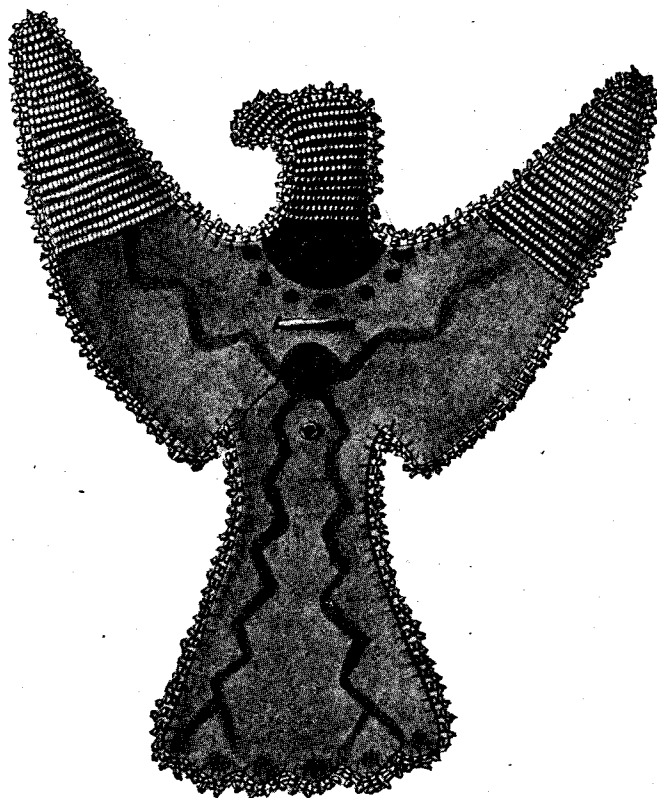


FIG. 92.—The Thunderbird.

With both Cheyenne and Arapaho the thunder (*ba'a'*) is a large bird, with a brood of smaller ones, and carries in its talons a number of arrows with which it strikes the victim of lightning. For this reason they call the eagle on our coins *baa*. When it thunders, they say *ba'a' nānitū' hut*, "the thunder calls." In Indian pictography the Thunderbird is figured with zigzag lines running out from its heart to represent the lightning. A small figure of it (represented in figure 92), cut from rawhide and ornamented with beads, is frequently worn on the heads of the dancers.