

is a very simple game, the contestants merely throwing or sliding the sticks along the ground to see who can send them farthest. Two persons or two parties play against each other, boys sometimes playing against girls or men against women. It is, however, more especially a girl's game. The game sticks (*bātiqta'wa*) are slender willow rods about 4 feet long, peeled and painted and tipped with a point of buffalo horn to enable them to slide more easily along the ground. In throwing, the player holds the stick at the upper end with the thumb and fingers, and, swinging it like a pendulum, throws it out with a sweeping motion. Young men throw arrows about in the same way, and small boys sometimes throw ordinary reeds or weed stalks. Among the Omaha, according to Dorsey, bows, unstrung, are made to slide along the ground or ice in the same manner.

69. YI'HĀ'Ā'HI'HI'

Yi'hā'ā'hi'hi', Yi'hā'ā'hi'hi',
Hā'nānā'h'gutha'-u ga'qaā'-hu'hu',
Hā'nānā'hi'gutha'-u ga'qaā'-hu'hu'.

Translation

Yi'hā'ā'hi'hi', Yi'hā'ā'hi'hi',
I throw the "button,"
I throw the "button."

In his trance vision the author of this song entered a tipi and found it filled with a circle of his old friends playing the *ga'qutit*, or "hunt the button" game. ~~This~~ is a favorite winter game with the prairie tribes, and was probably more or less general throughout the country. It is played both by men and women, but never by the two sexes together. It is the regular game in the long winter nights after the scattered families have abandoned their exposed summer positions on the open prairie, and moved down near one another in the shelter of the timber along the streams. When hundreds of Indians are thus camped together, the sound of the drum, the rattle, and the gaming song resound nightly through the air. To the stranger there is a fascination about such a camp at night, with the conical tipis scattered about under the trees, the firelight from within shining through the white canvas and distinctly outlining upon the cloth the figures of the occupants making merry inside with jest and story, while from half a dozen different directions comes the measured tap of the Indian drum or the weird chorus of the gaming songs. Frequently there will be a party of twenty to thirty men gaming in one tipi, and singing so that their voices can be heard far out from the camp, while from another tipi a few rods away comes a shrill chorus from a group of women engaged in another game of the same kind.

The players sit in a circle around the tipi fire, those on one side of the fire playing against those on the other. The only requisites are the "button" or *ga'qaā*, usually a small bit of wood, around which is tied a piece of string or otter skin, with a pile of tally sticks, as has