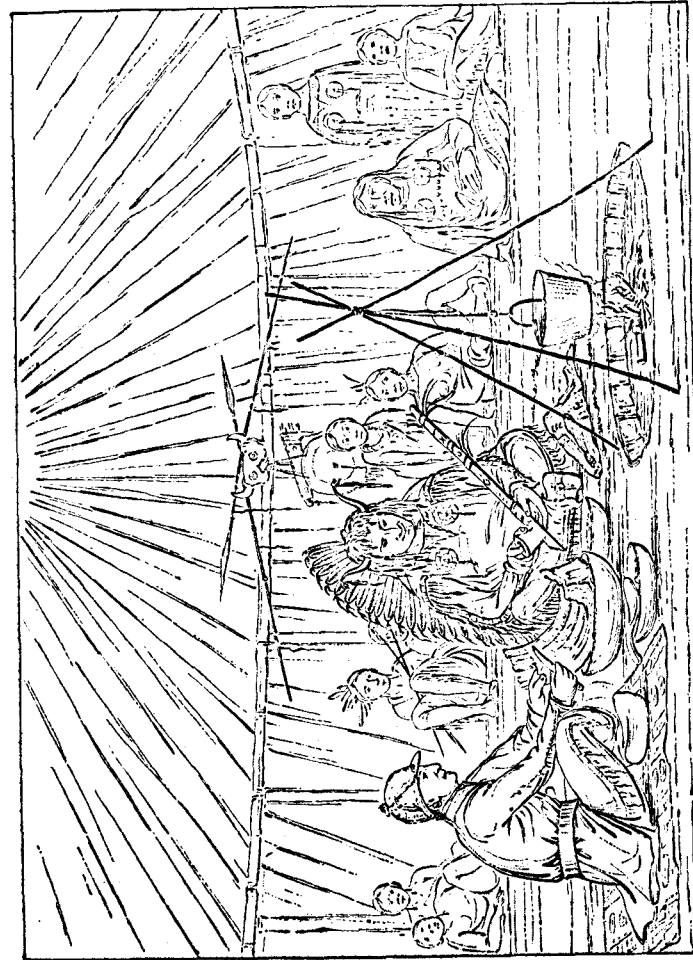


proved himself a guide and interpreter of unusual value, and made the stay of his guest both pleasant and profitable. The latter arrived at the time of a most important rite of the Mandans, the whole of which he was permitted to witness and the like of which he never saw before or after. This rite I shall refer to at length before the close of the lecture. Mr. Kipp, too, undoubtedly spoke well of his Indian friends. I have often observed on the frontier that white men who have lived long with any particular tribe of Indians acquire a greater sense of loyalty to such tribe, that they hate its enemies, love its friends, sound its praises, and maintain its superiority to all other tribes. Had Catlin had opportunities of witnessing the great ceremonies of other nations under the conduct of guides as well informed as Mr. Kipp, he would not perhaps have considered the Mandans so superior to other tribes as he represents them in his writings. It was this people which he selected as the subject of his origin theory. By a series of arguments and conclusions which we would now call "jumping," but which passed muster in the science of half a century ago, he established to his own satisfaction that the Mandans were descended from certain Welshmen who sailed in ten ships under the direction of Prince Madoc from North Wales in the early part of the fourteenth century. Although his theory has little value in the light shed by modern investigation, it controlled all his opinions, distorted many of his statements, and has transmitted its evil influence through the works of a host of compilers and book-makers, many of them of high fame in the scientific world, down to the present day. So much for some of the unfavorable influences of his environment.

There are various portraits and pictures of our subject extant. One appears in his notes on Travel in Europe. Mr. Thomas Donaldson, in his recent work,* presents three, and in his own works the artist often includes sketches of himself. The plate facing page 701 in Donaldson's work is a copy of a picture painted by the artist's own hand when he was twenty-eight years old. He is represented by his contemporaries as a person of medium height, slender, well formed, very graceful, and of a complexion so decidedly dark that some of his friends thought he might possibly claim for his own, a little of the blood of that race to whose study he had devoted a life-time.

In Pl. CXXX is shown one of Catlin's sketches of himself in the prime of his activity and usefulness. It represents him in 1832, at the age of thirty-six, seated at a feast in the lodge of Mah-to-toh-pa or Four Bears, then second chief of the Mandans, dressed in his buckskin hunting suit. According to the etiquette of the place and time, he eats alone out of a wooden bowl, while his host fills the calumet for him to smoke after his meal, and the women of the household act the part of spectators.

* "The George Catlin Indian Gallery in the U. S. National Museum (Smithsonian Institution), with Memoir and Statistics," in Smithsonian Report for 1835.



CATLIN DINING WITH MAH-TO-TOH-PA (FOUR BEARS), MANDAN CHIEF, JULY, 1832, AT THE MANDAN VILLAGE, UPPER MISSOURI. (From Donaldson's "Catlin Indian Gallery," Plate 125.)