

that the people must offer to him. During the cutting of the tongues, Sun priests, or medicine-pipe men, sat with the sacred women, and sang with them one hundred different, sacred songs. Nowadays, beef tongues are used in place of buffalo tongues, and, alas! in lesser number; but otherwise the cutting rites are faithfully observed.

At the appointed time, the tribe gathers on the slope running down from the Belly Butes to Belly River, and makes camp. A beautiful sight it is, the several hundred lodges, many of them painted with sacred designs, set up in a big circle upon the green slope. Within the circle are but three lodges; that of the Horns Society, a very large double lodge, with buffalo head paintings in black; near it, the very large, straight-wall lodge of the Matokiks (Gathered Women), the women's society, in proof of which are their travois set up all around the large wall; and last, the lodge of the vow woman and her husband the lesser vow women. This lodge is painted a deep red, Sun's sacred color, and just back of it is placed the skull of a buffalo bull. A small, freshly cut cottonwood leans against the rearside, and cottonwood branches surround the base, of the lodge.

As soon as the great camp is well settled down for the coming ceremonies, a sweat lodge is built in front of the red lodge, and within it, with proper prayers and songs, the vow woman and her husband, and her 'mother' and 'father', purify the dried tongues for sacrifice to the Above Ones. Following this, the vow woman and her assistant vow woman begin a fast, in the red lodge, of four days, during which time they are taught the Medicine Lodge rituals, the various and many songs and prayers, by her 'father' and 'mother', who also open, with proper ceremony, the Natoas bundle which she had purchased for them. It contains skins of small animals, small sacks of paints, tongs of a forked willow, seven rattles, and, most important of all, a digging-stick, and a headdress, copies of those that Tail-Feathers Woman had when she returned to earth from her stay with the Above Ones. The digging stick is red-painted, and attached to its upper or holding end is a bunch of the outer shells of Moose Hoofs. The rawhide band of the headdress is of rawhide, but is the shape of a lizard, and fringed with white weasel-skins. From it rise tall plumes, eagle and raven tail feathers, and attached to the front of it is a small human image containing seeds of native tobacco. During the opening of the bundle and the transferring of it to the new owner, the hours' long, interesting rites, songs, and prayers of the ceremony are carefully observed, and afford a most interesting spectacle. Some of the songs are as effecting and stirring as the more profound music of Handel and Haydn. In all, there are seventy different songs of the ceremony. In them, Sun is called Old Man, Moon is Old Woman, but their son bears his true name, Morning Star. The ceremony opens with the burning of incense, the participants purifying themselves in the smoke of the sweet grass and singing:

I am searching for sweet grass. Powerful it is.
I have found it, taken it. Powerful it is.

Songs 2, 3, and 4 then introduce the Above Ones, as follows:

Song 2.

Old Man is entering. Says he: 'Let us have a sweet lodge.'

Old Man says, 'I want a fisher. I want a white buffalo robe.'