



# The Protestant Episcopal Review.

By the Word of Truth.

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THE RELIGIONS OF SIOUAN TRIBES. •

INTRODUCTION.

THERE are in the United States and the Dominion of Canada fifty-seven distinct linguistic stocks or families of Indians, each of which may be compared with the Aryan or Indo-European family to which we belong. These families, which are composed of numerous tribes, differ not only in language, but also in customs, religions, physical characteristics, etc. One of these families, called Siouan (pronounced Soó-an), includes the Sioux or Dakota tribes, the Assiniboin, Omaha, Ponka, Quapaw, Osage, Kansa, Iowa, Oto, Missouri, Winnebago, Mandan, Hidatsa, Crow, Biloxi, and Pascagoula (?), west of the Mississippi river, and east of that stream, the Tutelo, Sapona, Occaneeche, Catawba, Woccon, and some tribes, now extinct, which inhabited that part of Virginia lying between the Rappahannock river and the habitat of the Powhatan Indians on the east and the Alleghany mountains on the west.

Prior to 1660, part of the Catawba tribe was on the upper part of the Kentucky river (which stream was named after them on many old maps), part settled on Catawba creek, in Botetourt and Roanoke counties, Virginia, and the Tutelo were on the Big Sandy\* river (called Totteroy river in the last century). The Tutelo, Sapona and Occaneeche spoke cognate dialects. These tribes gave name to three islands in the

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\*On the old maps the Little Sandy river, Kentucky, is called Little Totteroy. Perhaps some of the Tutelo had a village or villages near that stream.

Dan river, as we are told by Colonel William Byrd, of West over, in the last century.

From 1871 to 1873 the writer was missionary to the Ponka tribe, who then resided in what was Todd county, Dakota (now Nebraska). Since then he has acquired native texts and other information from the Omaha, Ponka, Quapaw, Kansa, Winnebago, Iowa, Oto, Missouri, Dakota, and Biloxi, of the Siouan family, and from nineteen Oregon tribes belonging to the Athapascan, Kusan, Shahaptian, Takilman and Yakanan families.

#### IDEA OF GOD.

• It has been asserted very confidently for about two hundred years that the North American Indian was a believer in one Great Spirit prior to the advent of the white race on this continent, and, that as he was a monotheist, it was an easy matter to convert him to Christianity. Indians have been represented as speaking of the "Great Spirit," the "Master of Life," etc., as if the idea of the one and only God was familiar to our aborigines during the pre-Columbian period. While the writer is unwilling to commit himself to a general denial of this assertion, he has been forced to conclude that it needs considerable modification, at least so far as it refers to tribes of the Siouan and Athapascan stocks. On close investigation it will be found that in many cases Indians have been quick to adopt the phrases of civilization in communicating with white people; but in speaking to one another they continue the use of their own terms. The Siouan tribes were not monotheists. The Messrs. Riggs, Pond and Hamilton, three pioneer missionaries to the Dakota and Iowa tribes, have published their testimony to that effect, and Dr. Washington Matthews has made a similar statement respecting the beliefs of the Hidatsa of North Dakota. That these Indians believed in a Great Spirit, who was supreme over all other superhuman powers, needs more evidence. In those cases alleged as proving a monotheistic belief among Siouan tribes, a closer study of the language employed reveals the fact that a generic term has been used instead of a specific one, and, in almost every instance, the writer who tells of one Great Spirit

supplements his account by relating what he has learned about beliefs in many gods.

PHENOMENA, HUMAN AND SUPERHUMAN.

In considering the subject from an Indian's point of view, one must avoid speaking of the supernatural as distinguished from the natural. It is better to divide phenomena as they appear to the Indian mind into the human and superhuman, as many, if not most, natural phenomena are mysterious or *wakan'* to the Indian. Nay, even man himself may become mysterious (as did Kehama) by fasting, prayer, and vision.

TERMINOLOGY.

One fruitful source of error has been a misunderstanding of Indian terms and phrases. The present writer has suspected some connection between the words for *mysterious*, *lightning*, *serpent*, and the name for a *superhuman power*. In the Dakota language, *wa-kan'* means *mysterious*, *wonderful*, *incomprehensible*; but it has been rendered *holy* by the missionaries. *Wa-kan'* *tan-ka*, the *Great Mysterious One*, has been used by the missionaries for God, though it is one of the names for the Thunder-Beings. The Ponka, Omaha and Kansa tribes employ *Wa-kan'-da* in several senses: 1. It is now used to denote the God of the Bible; 2. Some of the old people say that their ancestors always believed in a supreme *Wakanda* as well as in subordinate ones; 3. *Wakanda* sometimes refers to the Thunder-Being (the Omaha usually speak of one); 4. One day, in 1871, Cramped Hand, a Ponka shaman or mystery man, said to the writer, "I am a *Wakanda*." *Wa-kan'-da-gi*, used as a noun by the Omaha and Ponka, means a subterranean or sub-aquatic monster (hence it is applied to an alligator); used adverbially by them, it means wonderfully, referring to a precocious child, etc.; used as an adjective by the Kansa, it is the equivalent of the Dakota *wakan*; but a *wakandagi* among the Kansa is a mystery man or woman, a shaman, juggler, or doctor. The Osage usage is similar to that of the Kansa, though there is a slight difference in the pronunciation of the word. *Lightning* in Dakota is *wa-kan'-hdi* in the Santee dialect, *wakan'-kdi* in the Yankton, and *wakan'-gli* in the Teton. *Serpent* is *wakan'* in the

languages of the Iowa, Oto, Missouri and Winnebago, the Iowa and Oto tribes each having a Serpent gens, the Wakan' ki-kra'-tche, and the Winnebago Serpent gens being the Wakan' i-ki'-ka-ra'-tcha-da. Future studies may reveal traces of ophiolatry among the Siouan tribes. At all events, there is a reptile gens among the Omaha and one among the Ponka. The names for grandfather, grandmother, old man and old woman are terms of veneration, superhuman beings having these names applied to them in prayers and invocations.

Society is organized on a kinship basis among many, if not most, Indian tribes. Where descent is in the male line, the gens is the unit of kinship. A gens is a number of consanguinei, claiming descent from a common male ancestor, and having a common taboo or taboos. A clan differs from a gens only in the descent from a common *female* ancestor. A phratry is composed of two or more gentes (or clans) associated together for a common purpose; thus in the Kansa tribe, the War phratry consists of the two Han'-ga gentes, Large Hanga or Black Eagle, and Small Hanga or Chickenhawk; the Thunder-Being phratry is composed of the Deer, Buffalo, and Gray Hawk (or Thunder) gentes. When a tribe is traveling, it pitches the tents in a circle, within which are the sacred tents and the stock. Each gens has its special area within the circumference of the tribal circle. A subgens is one of the divisions of a gens.

#### BELIEFS IN HIGHER POWERS.

Two trustworthy Omaha told the writer that the ancestors of the Omaha and Ponka believed that there was a supreme being whom they called Wakanda. They did not know where He was, nor did they undertake to say how He existed. There was no public gathering at which some persons told others that there was a Wakanda, nor was there any general tribal assembly for prayer and sacrifice (excepting, of course, the thanksgiving ceremonies connected with the mystery-pole of the Omaha after a successful buffalo hunt). Each one thought in his heart that Wakanda existed. Some addressed the sun by that name. Others addressed Wakanda at random. Some worshiped the Thunder-Being as Wakanda. One

Omaha (of the Black Bear subgens) said that there were seven great Wakandas—Darkness, Upper World, Ground, Thunder-Being, Sun, Moon, and Morning Star, the chief Wakanda being in the upper world, above everything. Prayer was not made for such ordinary matters, such as going fishing, but only prior to engaging in great undertakings, such as starting on a journey or going to war. When a Ponka or Omaha changed his name on account of going to war, an old man was sent to a bluff to announce the event to the different Wakandas, including the bluffs, trees, birds, insects, reptiles, etc. When an Indian met with unexpected good fortune, the Omaha used to say, "Wakanda has aided him," or "Wakanda knows him," or "Wakanda has planned for his own (friend, relation, or subject)." When a Kansa prospered, he used to say, "Wakanda has indeed been looking at me!" When an animal escaped from an Omaha hunter, the man prayed thus: "Ho, Wakanda, you may have given me an animal, but now it seems that you have taken it away from me. I hope that you will cause another to appear to me."

#### PONKA BELIEF IN MALEFICENT SPIRITS.

About the year 1872 the writer was told by the Ponka that they believed death to be caused by certain maleficent spirits, whom they feared. In order to prevent future visitations from such spirits, the survivors gave away all their property, hoping that as they were then in such a wretched plight, the spirits might not think it worth while to make them more unhappy!

#### INVOCATION OF THE FOUR WINDS OR QUARTERS.

The Omaha and Ponka used to hold the pipe in six directions while smoking—towards the four quarters, the ground, and the upper world. In addressing the four winds or quarters, a peculiar expression was used by the Omaha, "O *Thou* who causest the four winds to reach such a place, help *ye* me!" In smoking towards the ground and the upper world, the suppliant had to say, "I petition to you who are one of the two, you who are reclining on your back, and also to you who are sitting directly above us. I wish both of you to help me." Some of the Omaha used to appeal to a subterranean

Wakanda when their word was doubted, saying, "The venerable man at the bottom hears me."

WORSHIP OF THE SUN.

The sun was worshiped as a Wakanda by the Ponka, Kansa, and Osage. On one occasion, when the Kansa went against the Pawnee, a stick was set up for a mystic ceremony, called "wa-khpe-le ga-ghe." Then the war-captain thus addressed the rising sun: "I wish to kill a Pawnee! I desire to bring horses when I return. I long to pull down a foe! I promise you a calico shirt and a buffalo robe. I will give you a blanket, too, O Wakanda, if you will allow me to return in safety after killing a Pawnee." As each warrior followed the example of the captain, he turned to the east and said: "I wish my party to pass along the road to the enemy! I promise a blanket to you, O Wakanda, if I succeed." On turning to the west, he said: "I promise you a feast, O Wakanda, if I succeed." The stick, which represented the enemy, was then attacked by the warriors, each one endeavoring to strike a blow. This may be compared with the attack on a tree made by Uncas and his Delaware followers, as related in "The Last of the Mohicans," chap. 31, p. 326 (J. W. Lovell's edition). A similar attack was made by the Omaha and Ponka on the cottonwood tree,\* which became their sacred pole over two hundred years ago. (An account of this will be given in a future article on Folk-lore.) Among the Osage and Kansa, prayer was made towards the rising sun in the morning and towards the setting sun in the afternoon. The Winnebago tradition of the creation relates how Ma-un'-na, the Earth-Maker, was sitting at the first on a piece of ground, not more than three or four feet square, facing the east. When the writer asked the Indian informant why Ma-un'-na faced the east, the quick reply was "Because the east is the source of all light and knowledge." Among the Kansa and Omaha, the head of a corpse is laid towards the east; for this reason no Omaha will recline with his head in that direction. The Kansa and Omaha lodges were built with their entrances

\*See *Harper's Magazine* for December, 1842, foot-note on p. 819, for the Chinese belief as to trees.



facing the east. The Kansa say that all their sacred objects came from the "great water" at the east.

The following is a close translation of the prayer which every Omaha traveler had to make when he held his pipe with the mouth-piece towards the sun: "Ho, Mysterious Power, you who are the Sun! Here is tobacco! I wish to follow your course. Grant that it may be so! Cause me to meet whatever is for my advantage, and to give a wide berth to whatever may be to my disadvantage. Throughout this island (*i. e.*, the world) you regulate everything that moves, including human beings. When you decide for one that his last day on earth has come, it is so. It cannot be delayed. Therefore, O Mysterious Power, I ask a favor of you."

#### WORSHIP OF THE MOON, ETC.

The moon is a Wakanda among the Osage, but no instances of its invocation have yet been found among the Omaha and Ponka. The Kansa sacrificed to the Morning Star. The Osage traditions recorded by the writer tell of several Wakandas among the stars. In former days the Kansa used to remove the hearts of their slain foes and put them in the fire as a sacrifice to the four winds. The Kansa used to pierce themselves with knives and splinters of wood, and offer small pieces of their flesh to the Wakandas.

#### INVOCATION OF THUNDER-BEINGS.

When the first thunder was heard in the spring, the Black Bear people of the Omaha tribe went to the sacred tent of the Elk people, where they assisted the Elk people in the worship of the Thunder-Being. At a similar gathering of the Ponka, the Black Bear people of that tribe said to the Thunder-Being: "Ho, venerable man! By your striking with your club you are frightening us, your grandchildren, who are here. Depart on high." When the Ish-ta-san-da (a reptile and thunder people) of the Omaha tribe become fearful during a thunder-storm, they fill a pipe with tobacco and offer it to the Thunder-Beings, saying: "O grandfather, I am very poor here. In some direction or other cause a place to be abandoned by those who would injure me. I think that you are there. O Walks-as-Forked-lightning, I think that you

are there. O Makes-Sheet-lightning Suddenly, I think that you are there. O Sheet-lightning-Returning, I think that you are there. O Thunder-Rolling-away, I think that you are there." The Omaha of the other gentes (animal families) fear to mention these four mystic names of Thunder-Beings, the guardian spirits, as it were, of the Ishtasanda, as well as to invoke the Thunder-Beings, unless they belong to the order of shamans who have had visions of such beings. Among the Dakota tribes such shamans are called the Heyoka order, named after Heyoka, the anti-natural gods, one of whom serves as a drumstick for the Thunder-Beings. None but these Heyoka people dare make drawings of the Thunder-Beings, and they can foretell the times of their own deaths by lightning. The Kansa tell the following: During the first thunder-storm of the year, the Lu or Thunder-Being people put a quantity of green cedar on a fire, making a dense smoke. The storm always ceases after the members of the other gentes have offered prayers. The men of the Buffalo gens aid those of the Lu gens in the worship of the Thunder-Being, by sending one of their men to open the sacred bag of gray hawk skin and remove the mystery pipe. These objects are kept by a man of the Lu gens, who is forbidden to open the bag, the gray hawk being the taboo of his gens, who are known as Gray Hawk people. When the men of the two Hanga gentes of the Kansa tribe (the Black Eagle and Chicken-hawk gentes) assemble to prepare for going to war, certain songs are sung, the first being three about the mystery pipe. These pipe songs are sung while the head man of the Chicken-hawk gens removes the coverings from the pipe. The first is as follows:

"Ha-há tché-ga-nú ha-há! (Sung thrice.)

Hü-hü'!\* (Said when the men press on the skin and bark envelopes of the pipe.)

*Chorus.*—Yá! yu! yá! Hü-hü'! Hü-hü'!" (Sung twice by all the men present.)

The chorus is an invocation of the Thunder-Being. In making it the arms are held up to the sky, being apart and parallel, with the palms out. Each arm is rubbed from the

\*"ü" is the German umlaut.

wrist to the shoulder by the other hand. The Ponka tribe also uses this song and invocation. The invocation consists of seven syllables, seven being one of the mystic numbers, and future investigation may confirm the suspicion that "Yu-hü" is the cryptic name of the higher power.

INVOCATION OF THE TRAP, ETC.

In the Omaha invocations of the trap, etc., the invisible being who was the first to make the beaver medicine and who taught its use to the Indians was thus addressed: "O thou who didst teach how to make the medicine, here is tobacco! Though I have your medicine, the nature of which I do not understand at all, grant that I may acquire something by means of it! Here is tobacco." When the hunter addressed the beavers, he said: "O ye Beavers, here is tobacco! Let all of you travel in your feeding-places which ye have made. Here is tobacco!" To the beaver medicine itself he said: "O Medicine, here is tobacco! Stand thou, thinking thus, 'At any rate an animal shall surely pass me and be caught in the trap, and its nostrils shall be large enough to inhale me.'" The trap was thus addressed: "O ye Pieces of Metal, here is tobacco! Sit ye and think thus, 'At any rate I shall kill one.'" To the pack-strap was said: "O Pack-Strap, here is tobacco! Think thou, 'At any rate I shall press against many quadrupeds.'" To the right side of the entrance of the lodge was said: "O thou who standest at the right side of the entrance\* to the lodge, here is tobacco! Think thou, 'At any rate I shall continue to have some one bring dead animals on his back and send them through me suddenly, rubbing against me as they pass through.'" To the principal tent-pole these words were spoken: "O thou who standest with the buffalo tail tied to thee, here is tobacco! Think thou, 'At any rate I shall have a quadruped come near me.'" When the hunter invoked the fire-place, he said: "O Fire-Place, here is tobacco! Think thou, 'At any rate I shall sit and have the water fall on me in drops as it boils over from the

\*Compare the "Dweller on the Threshold," in Bulwer's "Zanoni." The Dakota have the Dweller on the side of the entrance and the Dweller in the Forest, both terrible beings!

kettle containing the slain quadruped.” These invocations may be compared with what Habakkuk tells us about the Chaldeans, in the first chapter of his prophecy. In his prayer to God, he says: “These plunderers pull out all men with the hook, draw them with their casting-net, and gather them with their draw-net, and rejoice and are glad in it. Therefore they make offerings to their casting-net, and burn incense to their draw-net, for through them their catch is rich and their food dainty.”

BELIEFS AS TO CONTINUOUS EXISTENCE.

While the Dakota gods were regarded as mortal rather than immortal, the Indians of that nation, as well as those of the Omaha and cognate tribes, had a crude belief about a future life for the human race. Each Omaha and Ponka is supposed to have a ghost, spirit or shade, which does not perish at death. The old men used to say, “If you are good, you shall go to the good ghosts, but if you are bad, to the bad ghosts.” Nothing was ever said about going to dwell with Wakanda or with demons. This agrees with the tradition of the Athapascan Indians of Oregon: no Indian after death goes above to dwell with Khawanesha, the creator. An Omaha friend, Francis La Flesche, of the Indian Bureau, at Washington, has written as follows: “There are various beliefs concerning the immediate action of the spirit upon its withdrawal from the body. Some think that the soul at once starts upon its journey to the spirit-land, others that it hovers above the grave as if reluctant to depart. Because of this latter belief, food and water are placed at the head of the grave for several days after burial.” One account says that for four days and nights the food and water are thus placed, as the ghost is that long in going through a dark region before it reaches the Milky Way, the “Road of the ghosts,” which is well lighted. “No Indian would dare touch an article of this food, lest the ghost should snatch away the food and paralyze the mouth of the thief, twisting his face out of shape for the rest of his life, or else he would be pursued by the ghost, food would lose its taste, and hunger ever after haunt the offender.”

“There is a belief in the tribe that before the spirits finally depart from men who have died from wounds or their results, they float toward a cliff overhanging the Missouri, not far from the Santee Agency, Nebraska, and cut upon the rocks a picture showing their manner of death. A suicide ceases to exist; for him there is no future. A man struck by lightning is buried where he fell, and in the position in which he died.” But the present writer was told that when an Omaha was killed by lightning, he ought to be buried with his face down, and the soles of his feet had to be slit. When this was done, the ghost went at once to the spirit-land, giving no further trouble to the living. In the case of a man adopted into the Elk gens, this precaution was not observed, so his ghost walked till his brother was killed by lightning and laid beside him.

Some of the Dakota believe in four spirits for each person: one spirit remains at the grave, one goes to the spirit-land; and if one had had his picture taken in life, one of the spirits would go into the picture.

A few of the Omaha told the writer about the passage of the ghost along the spirit-road till it reached a place where the road forked; there sat an old man wrapped in a buffalo robe with the hair outside, and wearing a plume in his hair. On looking at each ghost, the old man made signs which road was to be taken: one road led to the abode of the good spirits, the other to that of the bad spirits. The belief of the Sapona Indians about the future life resembled that of the Omaha in one respect—there was a road to be traveled; at one part of the road sat the old man, who directed the good spirits to their happy home; at another part of the road the bad spirits met an ugly old woman, seated on a toadstool, with serpents instead of hair. She gave over the unhappy wretches to the charge of demon turkey-buzzards, that bore them to the abode of the bad spirits, where it was icy cold and dark. This account is found in Byrd's History of the Dividing Line between Virginia and Carolina, published in 1729. A dying member of the Omaha Black Shoulder gens was thus ad-

dressed (after being wrapped in a buffalo robe with the hair out, his face being painted with the privileged decoration of his people): "You are going to the animals (the buffaloes). You are going to rejoin your ancestors. You are going to the four winds. Be strong!" All members of the gens, females as well as males, were thus attired and spoken to when dying. The decoration referred to is made thus by the Omaha: two parallel lines are painted in red across the forehead, two are made on each cheek, and two under the nose, one being above the upper lip, the other between the lower lip and the chin. A dying member of the Hanga, another buffalo gens, of the Omaha, was decorated as above described, and then he was addressed by one of his gens: "You came hither from the animals, and you are returning thither. Do not face this way again. When you go, continue walking." That is, let not your spirit return to earth to harm us. That the dead are referred to as still existing, and as having some knowledge of what is happening here, may be seen from the address to a Ponka chief at his installation: "Your father was a chief, your elder brother was a chief, and your grandfather was a chief. May they continue to look directly down on you!" Those Omaha who boiled sacred food, as for the war-path, poured some of the soup outside the lodge as an offering to the ghosts. There was no belief in a bodily resurrection, simply one of a continuous existence as a ghost or spirit, except in the case of a mystery-man or woman, who, after the fourth incarnation, returned to the spirit-world to become extinct, or virtually so. The Kansa told the writer that they believed each ghost at the moment of death to return to the spirit-village nearest the habitat of those then living. That is, all Indians do not go to one spirit-village but to a series of such villages, consisting of the deserted village-sites. Thus, the ghost of one who dies on the present Kaw reservation, Oklahoma, returns to the former village at Council Grove, Kansas; the ghost of one who died at Council Grove went back to the old village on the Big Blue river; and so on, till the remote sites on the Missouri were reached.

## IDEA OF SIN.

The scriptural idea of sin appears to have been wanting among these tribes. There have been recorded by the writer and a few others many acts which were deemed violations of religious law; but few of them can be compared with what the Bible declares to be sins. For instance, in the estimation of the Omaha it was dangerous to make a false report to the keeper of the sacred tent of war or to the four directors of the buffalo hunt, for the offender was sure to be struck by lightning, or bitten by a serpent, or killed by a foe, or thrown from a horse, or have some other disaster befall him. It was dangerous to break the taboo of a gens or subgens, or to violate any other ancient custom; the offender would break out in boils, or he would have gray hair, etc. Woe to the man or beast that overturned the sacred tents or trod on the sacred pole, unless the keepers of the tents absolved the person or animal by rubbing him from head to foot with wild sage (*Artemisia*).

## IDEA OF SACRIFICE.

The idea of sacrifice as atoning for sin has not yet been found by the writer among these Sionan tribes. But sacrifice, whether in the form of fasting, self-torture, or of offering of property, was often made in order to win the favor of a god—*i. e.*, to obtain a temporal advantage, or to avert the anger of demons, as when the people were suffering from famine or an epidemic.

## ANTHROPOMORPHISM, ETC.

While there are shamans and various orders of them in the tribes, no traces of shaman worship have been found. Everything animate and inanimate was thought to have its "shade" or "soul;" life was everywhere. Certain animals were worshiped. There were traces of anthropomorphism; for some of the gods were in human form, others were supposed to inhale the odor of tobacco smoke; they breathed, they ate, they used weapons against one another as well as against human beings, and on one occasion an Indian was called on to aid one or the other of two contending gods, a Thunder-Being

and a spirit of the water. They heard, thought, married, died, and were succeeded by their children.

The religions of these people affected the social organization of the tribes which have gentes bearing mystic names; orders of shamans were intimately associated with them, personal names still refer to them, and almost every act of daily life was influenced by them.

#### THE CULTS OF THE FOUR ELEMENTS.

Several years prior to writing this paper, the author had observed Dr. Foster's statement in his "Indian Record and Historical Data" respecting the division of the Winnebago tribe into four groups, named after the earth, air, fire, and water, respectively. Here the reader must be cautioned against supposing that "air" is used in this paper in its scientific sense, as the Indians were ignorant of the nature of the atmosphere. They distinguished between the "Something that moves," the four quarters, and the winds, and they had distinct names for the clouds and the upper world as well. "Air" is here used to denote the element of the "Something that moves," for want of a better term.

During the year 1890, the author obtained from the three principal Ponka chiefs the classification of their gentes by phratries, and the character of the mystic songs peculiar to each phratry. On comparing this information with what has been learned respecting the Dakota gods, there seem to be good reasons for inferring that not only the Dakota tribes, but also the Omaha, Ponka, Kansa, Osage, Quapaw, Iowa, Oto, Missouri, and Winnebago had the cults of the four elements—earth, fire, air, and water.

Among the Omaha, Iowa and cognate tribes, we find that when a gens assembled as a whole, apart from the tribe, for council purposes, the members sat in a circle around the fire. (See Fig. 1.) Places in the circle were assigned according to kinship: thus, the Black Bear and Small Bird people of the Dha'-ta-da gens of the Omaha are spoken of as "sitting on the same side of the fire-place," because they are full kin, while they are partially related to the Eagle and Turtle people who sit on the other side of the circle. This Dha-ta-da circle



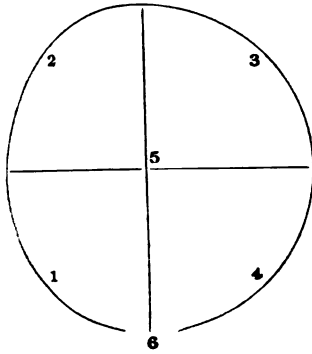


Fig. 1. Dha-ta da circle. Legend: 1. Black Bear people. 2. Small Bird. 3. Eagle. 4. Turtle. 5. Fireplace. 6. Entrance.

is remarkable not only for its arrangement according to kinship, but also for its symbolic character; because the Black Bear people are associated with the ground or earth, as is shown by their personal names; in the Small Bird subgens are found the Thunder-Being or Fire people; the Eagle subgens apparently consists of "Air" people; and Water people are in the Turtle subgens.

This suggests another diagram, in which are put the names of the four classes of Dakota gods of the elements, co-ordinated with what the writer suspects to be their appropriate quarters and symbolic colors. (See Fig. 2.)

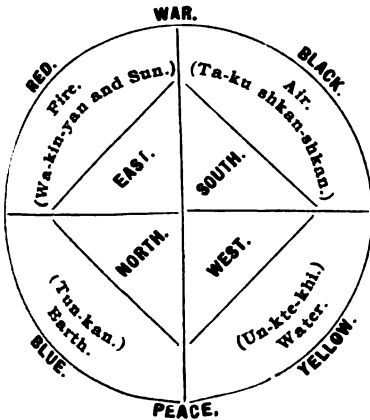


Fig. 2. The co-ordination of the four quarters, elements, colors, etc. The horizontal diameter divides the War powers from the Peace powers.

In some tribes, the Earth people assist the Fire people. Do the Water people ever aid the Air people in any ceremony? The Fire powers are hostile to the powers of the Water; and we have yet to learn whether, in any gens, a subgens named after the Thunder-Beings sits on the same side of the fire with one named after a power of the Water. Is there a warfare going on between the powers of the Air and those of the Earth? The Air and Fire powers are concerned in all kinds of suffering, including war, disease, and death, and there is no hostility between them; on the contrary, in several tribes, the Four Winds or else the Four Quarters are invoked at the consecration of the fire-places of a permanent village. Furthermore, the Ka<sup>a</sup>-se gens of the Osage tribe has several names: Fire people, Wind people, Southwind people, and Those who Light the Pipes (in council). The powers of the Earth and Water are interested in the preservation of life, and so we may consider them as the patrons of peace. "Peace," in the languages of the Omaha, Ponka, Iowa, Oto, and Missouri, means "The land is good," and "to make peace" is expressed by "to make the land good." The words for "water" and "life" are identical in a few of the Siouan languages, and they differ but slightly in others.

But we must note some apparent inconsistencies. While the powers of the Water, according to Dakota belief, created the world and the human race, they are thought to feed on human ghosts, and ghosts are included among the servants of the Water powers. One of the Thunder-Beings, in the Dakota belief, uses as his drumstick a little Heyoka (or anti-natural) god, grasping him by the tail and beating his head against the drum! While the powers of Fire and Water are enemies, it is curious to observe that in the Elk or War gens of the Omaha tribe, as well as in the two war gentes of the Kansa tribe, there is a sacred clam-shell in addition to the war-pipe (or pipes).

According to the tradition of the Black Shoulder, an Omaha gens, the ancestral buffaloes found the east and south winds bad ones, but the north and west winds were good. From this we infer that the Omaha associated the east with the

Fire powers or else with the sun, the south with the Wind powers, the north with the Earth powers, and the west with the powers of the Water. On the other hand, an Iowa man told the late Mr. Hamilton that the south wind was a beneficent one, while the evil one was the north-west wind. This variation may have been caused by a difference in the habitats of the tribes referred to. When the leaders of the two Kansa war gentes invoked the four quarters, they began on their left with the east (hence they had been facing the south), next they addressed the south, and, after turning to the west, they ended with the north. (See Fig. 3.) A like

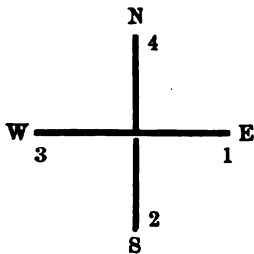


Fig. 3. Kansa order of invoking the four winds.

order was observed among the Dakota tribes (the openings of several of whose tribal circles face the north) in felling the tree for the sun-dance pole, and by their "priests" in various rites pertaining to the White Buffalo Festival of the Hunkpapa (a Dakota tribe), as related by Miss Fletcher in a recent report of the Peabody Museum at Cambridge, Mass. The old man of the Tsi'-shu gens of the Osage tribe consecrated each mystic fire-place by placing four sticks in the form of a cross, beginning with the stick at the west, and then laying the sticks at the north, east, and south. (See Fig. 4.) This

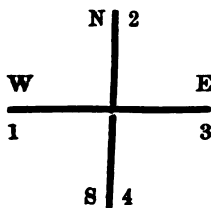
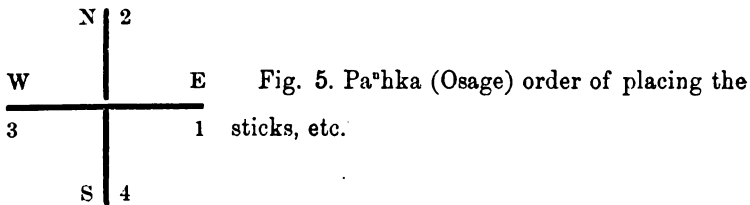
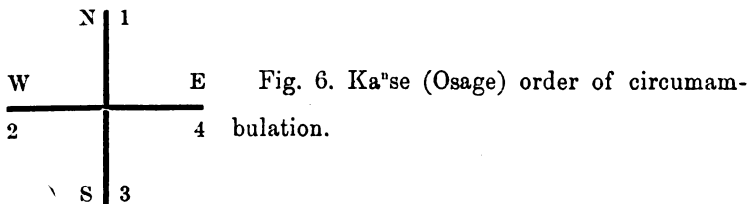


Fig. 4. Tsishu (Osage) order of placing the four sticks, etc.

old man belonged to the left or Peace half of the tribal circle, so he began with the quarters pertaining to the peace elements. But the Pa<sup>h</sup>-ka old man of the same tribe began on the right, with the stick at the east, and ended with that at the south. (See Fig. 5.) His gens is the peace-making



gens on the right or war side of the tribal circle. Whenever the Osage warriors returned from war they were met outside the village by the principal man of the Ka<sup>se</sup> (the Wind or South-wind gens). He walked in a circle around the warriors, performing a ceremony as he started from the north, repeating it at each quarter, and ending with the east. (See Fig. 6.) When the Dakota priest or shaman, in the White



Buffalo Festival, wished to rotate the plate containing the cherries and down, he grasped the plate with his *right* hand (associated with War in the Osage tribe) between the east and south piles of cherries, and his left hand held the plate between the west and north piles. Before Sitting Bull took his final steps in the late troubles at Pine Ridge reservation, he was visited by one of the lady teachers, whom he knew. "Daughter," said he, "advance on the left-hand side of my lodge and shake hands with your left hand."

## SYMBOLIC COLORS.

On the tent of a Black Bear man of the Omaha tribe four colors of lightning are represented. (See Fig. 7.) This

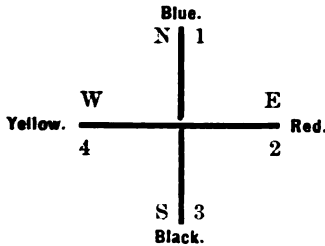


Fig. 7. Order of lightnings (in colors) on the tent of the Omaha man, Hu-pe-dha.

was a personal-mystery decoration, and the colors were blue, red, black, and yellow. The same colors appear in the tradition of the Wolf or Earth-lodge Makers' gens of the Omaha, but the order is red, black, yellow, and blue. The wolf is associated with war among the Kansa and Dakota, and probably among the Omaha; hence red is appropriate as the first color in the Wolf gens. Blue is assumed as the Earth color for two reasons: 1. In the decorations of those who have had visions of bears there is a broad blue band representing the earth (as the Omaha admit), out of which the bear is sometimes depicted as issuing. 2. As the Indians seldom distinguish between blue and green, the former color may symbolize grass and other vegetation springing from the earth. Red is the Omaha color for the east. Among the Dakota the weapons of war were said to have been given by the Thunder-Beings or Fire powers, hence they are reddened. Black is thought to be the color of the "Something-that-Moves," or the Air power, whose servants (in the Dakota cult) are the four Winds and the four Black Spirits of Night. The Santee Dakota consider the raven (a *black* bird) and a small *black* stone symbolic of the Four Quarters. Black, as a war color, is put on the faces of the Omaha and Osage warriors. Yellow is assumed to be the color appropriate to the west and to water. The Dakota, Ponka, and other tribes have been familiar for years with the color of the water in the Missouri river. The decoration on the tent of a Turtle man

of the Omaha is on a yellow ground; a similar yellow ground appears on the decoration of the tent of the Omaha chief, two grizzly bears, of the Hanga gens, a buffalo people who claim a sub-aquatic origin; and in the same gens is another tent decoration, with a yellow band at the top.

From what has been said we are led to make the following provisional co-ordinations :

DHATADA SUBGENTES.	DAKOTA GODS.	ELEMENTS.	QUARTERS.	COLORS.
Black Bear.	Tun'kan or Earth god.	Earth.	North.	Blue (or Green).
Small Bird.	Wa-kin'-yan, "Flying One." Thunder-Being.	Fire.	East.	Red.
Eagle.	Tá-ku shkan'-shkan "Something that Moves."	Air.	South.	Black.
Turtle.	Unk-té-khi, Water god.	Water.	West.	Yellow.

The Dakota shamans say that the Thunder-Beings are of four colors in outward form (black, yellow, scarlet, and blue), though in essence they are one. As among the Zúñi, there are not only the four quarters, which with the zenith, nadir, and centre make seven, but each of these seven has its seven divisions (north-north, north-east, north-west, north-zenith, etc.); so among the Siouan tribes (as well as the Zúñi) there appear to be such combinations as black-red, yellow-red, scarlet-red, and blue-red, with their symbolic associations.

The symbolic colors of the Cherokee, Ojibwa, Navajo, Apache, Zúñi, and Aztec tribes are given to show tribal variations. Dr. Matthews says that, in rare cases, white is assigned by the Navajo to the north and black to the east, and that black represents the male and blue the female.

QUARTERS.	CHEROKEE.	OJIBWA (1).	OJIBWA (2).	NAVAJO (1).	NAVAJO (2).	APACHE (1).	APACHE (2).	ZUNI.	AZTEC.
East.	Red (1).	White.	Red.	White (1).	Yellow.	Black.	Yellow.	White (4).	Yellow.
South.	White (4).	Green.	Green.	Blue (2).	Red.	White.	Green or Blue.	Red (3).	White.
West.	Black (3).	Red.	White.	Yellow (3).	Blue.	Yellow.	Black.	Blue (2).	Blue.
North.	Blue (2).	Black.	Black.	Black (4).	White.	Blue.	White.	Yellow (1).	Red.
Zenith.				Blue.				All Colors.	
Nadir.				White and Black Spots.				Black.	

With reference to variants found in the same tribe, as noted in the above table, the writer has learned that such differences are due, not so much to different authorities, as to differences in habitats of members of a tribe.

That these symbolic colors play an important part in the religions of the Indians, may be seen from what the author has published about Osage war customs, from which it will suffice to quote a few examples: "All the gentes on the Cheezhoo side use fire-paint, which is red, applying it with the left hand all over the face. They use prayers about the fire, saying, 'As the fire has no mercy, so should we have none.' On the right side of the tribal circle they put mud on the right cheek below the eye. This is the young buffalo bull decoration. With reference to it a man says: 'My little grandfather (the young buffalo bull) is always dangerous as he makes an attempt. Very close do I stand, ready to go to the attack!' Some warriors who act as black bears (probably invoking such animal powers) paint with charcoal alone. (The tradition of the Black Bear people tells how they brought down fire from the upper world.) Some paint in the wind style, some in the lightning style, others in the panther or catamount style." It seems very probable that when a warrior decorated himself in imitation of his ancestral or patron deity, and uttered the prescribed invocation, he felt that the influence of that deity was upon him. Ritual observances with many, if not all, constituted one of the most important parts of religion.

#### EXTENT OF THE GODS' POWER.

The power of each class of elemental gods extends beyond its special element. Thus, the Unk-te-khi, who rules in the water, has for his servants or allies the black owl in the forest (this may refer to the Dweller-in-the-Forest of the Dakota, and the In-da-dhin-ga of the Ponka, a sort of bogey), eagles in the air, and serpents in the earth. The Dakota say that the Thunder-Beings have as their servants the bear (whose abode is in the ground), the beaver (who is associated with the water), the butterfly (who lives in the air), and the deer (Thunder-Being references occur in many Deer and Elk names



among the Omaha). There is a similar belief among the Zuñi in the south-west.

#### THUNDER-BEINGS.

As the order of Thunder shamans is composed of those who have had dreams or visions of the sun, moon, stars, Thunder-Beings, or some other super-terrestrial objects or phenomena, may not all super-terrestrial beings, objects, etc., including those of the "Upper World," be regarded as Thunder-Beings by the Indians? That is to say (in considering the composite personal names, such as Eagle Thunder-Being, Hawk Thunder-Being, Pigeon Thunder-Being, etc.), may not the eagles, crows, hawks, pigeons, and other birds of the upper worlds be Eagle Thunder-Beings, Hawk Thunder-Beings, Crow Thunder-Beings, etc., though their special element is not the Fire but the Air, while the grizzly bears, who reside *underground* in the same upper world or worlds, have given rise to the personal name, Grizzly-Bear Thunder-Being? If this be correct, the personal name, Boulder Thunder-Being, may refer to a supposed natural boulder in the upper world, unless the following supposition as to composite names be correct:

#### COMPOSITE NAMES.

Each of the composite names may refer to a vision of a composite animal, who was subsequently regarded as the guardian spirit of the person having the dream or vision; or the bearer of such a name may have had a dream or vision of two distinct powers. In the pictograph of such a name the symbols of the two powers represented in the name are joined. The following are a few of the composite names which may be found hereafter to symbolize the four elements: Turtle Grizzly-Bear (Water and Earth?); Grizzly-Bear Small-Bird (Earth and Air?); Fire Grizzly-Bear (Fire and Earth?); Whirlwind Grizzly-Bear (Air and Earth?); Buffalo Small-Bird; Crow Buffalo-Bull; Buffalo-Bull Buffalo-Cow (one name); Buffalo-Bull Wind; Buffalo-Cow Eagle. The Kansa tribe has two composite names (gained by the writer—there may be many others): Moon Hawk and Moon Hawk Female—the latter, which is found in the Omaha and Ponka list of

names, suggesting the Egyptian figure of a woman's body with a hawk's head, surmounted by a crescent moon. In the personal-name lists are found—First (or One) Grizzly-Bear, Two Grizzly-Bears, Three Grizzly-Bears, Four Grizzly-Bears, Many Grizzly-Bears, One Crow, Two Crows, Three Crows, Four Crows, Many Crows. The author suspects that these names and many others of like character are symbolic of the four quarters and the upper and lower worlds, and that the Indian who was named after the larger number of mystic objects enjoyed the protection of more spirits (in the estimation of his people) than did he whose name referred to a smaller number. This accords with the Cherokee notion, described by Mooney, in his article on the Cherokee theory and practice of medicine.\* The shaman is represented as calling first on the Red Hawk from the east, then on the Blue Hawk from the north, the two hawks accomplishing more by working together. Still more is accomplished when the Black Hawk from the west joins them, and a complete victory is won when the White Hawk from the south joins the others. Compare this with the Osage belief that the witness who could show his seven sticks (representing as many brave and generous deeds) was of more importance in the eyes of the gods than he who could show only six sticks or a smaller number.

The foregoing article is based on a paper read before the American Folk-Lore Society, at New York, in 1890. In the discussion on that paper, Miss Alice C. Fletcher remarked that while she had had no communication with the writer for several years (and was ignorant of the nature of his essay until she heard it read), she, too, had visited several Siouan tribes and had reached conclusions identical with those presented in the essay. A gentleman who had traveled in Asia observed that during the reading of the paper he closed his eyes and could almost imagine that he was once more among the Arabs.

The subject of Indian Religions has been treated more fully by the author in "A Study of Siouan Cults," illustrated by

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\**Jour. Amer. Folk-Lore*, Vol. III., No. viii., pp. 49, 50.

many colored sketches prepared by Indians, and soon to be published in the Eleventh Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology.

The reader cannot fail to note how these aborigines have confounded the creature with the Creator in their attempts to answer the questions, What, How, Why, and Whither? The missionary among such a people, so long as he remains ignorant of their real beliefs and practices, must labor under great disadvantages, often "beating the air" when he imagines that his preaching has reached the hearts of his hearers. And though, by Divine aid, souls have been rescued by men entirely ignorant of aboriginal beliefs, we can learn from the example of St. Paul that a knowledge of the manners, customs, literature and religion of a people are of great importance to him who would lead many to the Lord Jesus. With that end in view, and asking the Divine blessing thereon, this paper is now presented.

J. OWEN DORSEY.

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## THE GENERAL CONVENTION OF 1892.

BY THE BISHOP OF MISSOURI.

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ONE of the marks of this Church is that she seeks out and follows the old paths. In the first Council of the Church, held in Jerusalem, the journal whereof appears in the fifteenth chapter of the sacred book of the Acts, debate and discussion are sanctioned. After debate and discussion the apostles and elders and brethren of that Council chose and sent forth missionaries; and they also wrote and issued a pastoral letter. In the late General Convention at Baltimore, the old way was held to. No minute scrutiny is needed to show that debate and discussion, missionaries, and the pastoral letter, were the three most prominent characteristics of it.