

men who dwell on the earth, standing where the Sun of the daylight emerges. This decree or resolve is now in force. The Sun of the daylight rises immediately beyond the place where the tree stands.

"When he, the Sun of the daylight, is flying along where the tree stands, he dances, saying, 'I will attend to the nations living toward the west—the sunsetting; they will be rejoiced, they will laugh; I will be pleased to have cared for them as my duty points out.' Then he climbs the sky. When in mid-sky he rests himself for a short time, and repeats what he said in the morning, while dancing. In the evening, when the sun is setting, he says, 'I am glad to have done my duty.'

"On this tree there is sitting a small bird, and it usually is speaking while sitting; it uses the voice and the languages of all the nations of men and of all the kinds of beasts. It is called *teya-wēñ-tēn-ha-wiq-ti* ('the bringer of the day'), and also, *te-wēñ-tches* (—?), it is said.

"This thing will endure in the future so long as the world stands. This tree is of a white color. It is limbed, and all its branches are diverse and different from one another, and they are the tongues of men living upon the earth. About and among these branches the small bird, *te-wēñ-tches*, lives and passes."

This beautiful legend appears to be made up from parts of a sun-myth and a dawn-myth. A mythopœic Iroquois of some past and forgotten age, looking out from some forest-bound clearing, and the surrounding trees standing perspectively thirty degrees above the horizon, to watch the birth of a new day, may, perhaps, have been moved to frame this myth by many striking considerations. Among these may have been the following: (1) The fitful coruscations of auroral light playing over the eastern firmament, whitening and illuminating it until all objects between it and the beholder seemingly are draped in this white glow of the coming dawn; (2) the early polyphonous chattering and singing of the feathered tribes and the many voices and ululations of the beast world filling the yet dark lower air with a confused and many-tongued music, while the makers of these sounds are yet invisible to the listener; and (3) the fact that only a single species of bird was known to begin this early morning chorus, not an improbable circumstance for inferring that this bird spoke all the languages common to all animated creation. At the present day the Tuscaroras call a person noted for early rising *nāk-tci-rēñ-rēn*, after the name of a bird which is the first to be heard in the morning.

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IMPROVED CHEROKEE ALPHABETS.

BY JAMES MOONEY.

(The Cherokee syllabic alphabet, invented by Sequoya about 1823, made the Cherokees at once a literary people) and has probably contributed more than any other one thing to elevate them to the high position which they now occupy among the aboriginal tribes. (The syllabary, however, has several defects) which seriously impair its usefulness. (A number of the characters are so nearly alike that they can scarcely be distinguished even in the most carefully written manuscript. There is no logical connection of characters denoting related sounds—as *tsa*, *tse*, *tsi*, etc.—and finally each character commonly requires several strokes in the making, and cannot be joined to the other characters of the word, thus rendering writing a slow and laborious task.) Several attempts have been made to remedy these defects, notably by Father Morice and William Eubanks.

Father Morice, who is attached to a mission station at Stuart's Lake, in British Columbia, has elaborated an alphabet or syllabary on the plan of the Déné and Cree alphabets, invented for those tribes by the missionaries in the northwest. In this system all related sounds are represented by the same character, in different positions or with the addition of a dot or stroke. Thus, \vee is *hu*; inverted \wedge it is *hā*; with the apex to the left $<$ it is *ha*; to the right $>$ it is *hū*, while a dot or a short stroke in the angle makes it respectively *hi* or *he*. The plan is simple, and the characters are readily distinguishable, but unfortunately not adapted to word combination in manuscript. The inventor says, "Just think of it! When you know the value of *s* and *h* you merely learn *ten* signs with their *four* positions and a few logical modifications—distinguishable at sight—and in one evening you know how to read!"

The other alphabet, invented by William Eubanks, a Cherokee mixed-blood, of Tahlequah, Indian Territory, is a system of shorthand and well adapted to rapid manuscript writing. By means of dots variously placed, fifteen basal characters, each made with a single stroke, either straight or curved, represent correctly every sound in the language. Mr. Eubanks is enthusiastic over his system, which is the result of much close study on his part, and is endeavoring to promote its adoption by the distribution of printed copies at his own expense among those who read the language.

Notwithstanding the evident advantages of either system over the

old one, it is unlikely that any change will be adopted by the tribe. When Sequoya's alphabet was invented, seventy years ago, the Gulf States, the Ohio valley, and the Great West were all Indian country, and the Indian languages had a commercial and even a political importance. Now, all this is changed. There are to-day in the Cherokee Nation nearly two thousand white citizens, while those with one-half or more of white blood constitute by far the majority of the tribe. Many of the leading men of the nation are unable to speak the language, while the legislative and court proceedings, the national records, and the national education are all in English, and the full-blood, who cannot speak English, is fast becoming a rarity. The Cherokees are rapidly becoming white men, and when the last full-bloods discard their old alphabet—which they love because it is Indian—they will adopt that of the ruling majority.

A KIOWA MESCAL RATTLE.

BY JAMES MOONEY.

While making ethnologic investigations among the Kiowa on the upper Red river in Indian Territory the writer obtained, among other things, a peculiarly symbolic rattle used in the mescal-eating ceremony. The rattle is diminutive, being only about nine inches long, exclusive of the buckskin fringes, which are ornamented with beads and the feathers of the bluebird. These feathers, as also some of another species at the top of the rattle, have a symbolic meaning in connection with the mescal rite. The gourd of the rattle is about the size of a small hen egg, being the ordinary gourd commonly used for this purpose, and is covered with carvings symbolic of the rite, which seems to be a worship of the elements or the powers of nature.

Radiating downward for a short distance from the top of the rattle are a number of lines, painted green, representing the falling rain, green or blue being the symbolic color of water. On opposite sides of the rattle are two zigzag red lines, running the whole length of the gourd. These represent the mescal songs, the same device of zigzag lines being frequently used in the Kiowa pictograph system to represent songs, the idea, perhaps, being to indicate the rising and falling of the voice in singing. In one of the divisions formed by the parallel lines is the figure of a flower with a bird pecking at it, representing the mescal and a bird (not identified) which is said

to feed upon it. The bird is painted yellow, either because this is its natural color or to indicate that it is sacred to the sun. I have been told that it is the humming-bird, which sucks the honey from the flower. In the other division is a figure with a round center painted yellow, from which radiate six curved lines, running out from a double circle of yellow dots around the central disk. The whole figure represents the mescal itself, which is possibly regarded as typical of the sun, yellow being the color symbolic of the sun, or rather of the auroral morning light.

By the side of this last is the principal figure, the rude semblance of a woman, with a sort of crown or halo about her head, a fan in her left hand, and a star under her feet. This is the "Mescal Woman"—*Sei-Māⁿyi* of the Kiowa—the presiding goddess of the ceremony. The figure has a double meaning, and while apparently only a fantastic figure of a woman, it conveys also to the minds of the initiated a symbolic representation of the interior of the sacred mescal lodge. Turning the rattle with the handle toward the east, the lines forming the halo about the head of the figure represent the circle of devotees within the lodge. The head itself, with the spots for eyes and mouth, represents the large consecrated mescal which is placed upon a crescent-shaped mound of earth in the center of the lodge, this mound being represented in the figure by a broad curving line, painted yellow, forming the curve of the shoulders. Below this is a smaller crescent curve—the original surface of the gourd—representing the smaller crescent mound of ashes built up within the crescent of earth as the ceremony progresses. The horns of both crescents point toward the door of the lodge on the east side, which in the figure is toward the feet. In the center of the body is a round circle, painted red, emblematic of the fire within the horns of the crescent in the lodge. The lower part of the body is green, symbolic of the eastern ocean, beyond which dwells the goddess, and the star under her feet is the morning star, which heralds her approach. In her left hand is a figure representing the fan of eagle feathers used to shield the eyes from the glare of the fire during the ceremony.

It may be proper to state that many of the mescal eaters wear crucifixes, which they regard as sacred emblems of the rite, the cross representing the cross of scented leaves upon which the consecrated mescal rests during the ceremony, while the Christ is the mescal goddess.