

all sides, the sacred parcel is handed to the august "doctor of the year," always using only the right hand. Next morning both the heads meet before sunrise at an appointed rendezvous, and as the sun appears, holding the meal in the left hand, and with the right taking pinches, breathing on it and then tossing it toward the sun, they meanwhile pray to the Sun Father for rain, grass, crops, and general prosperity.

On their return to the village they summon their medicine orders. Four days of fasting and preparation are "outside days," when the medicine men may move about keeping fast; but the four "inside days" which succeed are spent within the medicine house in rigid fasting, as elsewhere described under the "praying smoke." No one must enter the room or even call at the door but themselves, save the wife of the head of all, who sweeps it, brings water to fill the *tinaja* (jar), and tobacco for cigarettes. Day and night they sit and smoke, the veterans reciting traditions of the order, that the younger may learn them by heart.

On the morning of the last day four pairs of marshals go on their mission in different directions. Once outside the village they cast off their blankets and run swiftly, carrying the "prayer stick," a small bit of wood with certain magical feathers bound to it in a peculiar fashion: these prayer sticks to be planted in some sequestered spots at the four cardinal points outside the village; and after praying over them they run wildly over the country, blowing away witches and tossing up all evil spirits with long feathers, to be borne away on the wings of the wind.

Medicine-making must be done only in the dark blue breech-clout and with faces painted after a certain fashion; and the two forerunners are indicated by lightning marks on the legs.

The "dance" begins in the room of the fasters, and when the door is opened the people outside stand with bare feet, motionless. Every detail of the performance is religiously regulated, and the seats are in the order of rank. In front of each medicine man is the "mother," the ear of white corn with its feather tuft and turquoise ornaments; and in front of the father of all is the *cajete* (earthen bowl) of sacred water, the mirror of all the world and its events.

The sacred cigarette or *weer* is used to wreath the magic mirror in smoke, when the *shaman* (medicine man) would foretell the year, or watch the witches in their tricks, or see what is going on in the world, and to blind the eyes of game during the sacred hunt. It is the fee for the services of the shaman when there is sickness, and is used to cover the trail of the departed soul, that the witches and evil spirits may not trace its path.

The *weer* is never to be lit at a common fire or with a match, but only from the sacred fire in the *estufa*—a coal from the hearth of the *cacique* (chief religious official), a flint and steel, or the unique old fire-drill, a dry round stick fitting closely in a cavity, and turned very fast, always from right to left.

The sacred song is sung, a rude ode to the "mother" of the crops,