

Her hand to the spirits she raised and said,
And her sun-browned cheeks were aflame with red:—
"I am pure!—I am pure as the falling snow!
Great Taku-skan-skan²¹ will testify!
And dares the tall coward to say me no?"
But the sullen warrior made no reply.
She turned to the chief with her frantic cries:
"Wakáwa,—my Father; he lies,—he lies!
Wiwástè is pure as the fawn unborn;
Lead me back to the feast, or Wiwaste dies!"
But the warriors uttered a cry of scorn,
And he turned his face from her pleading eyes.

Then the sullen warrior, the tall Red Cloud,
Looked up and spoke and his voice was loud;
But he held his wrath and he spoke with care:
"Wiwástè is young; she is proud and fair,
But she may not boast of the virgin snows.
The Virgins' Feast is a sacred thing;
How durst she enter the Virgins' ring?
The warrior would fain, but he dares not spare;
She is tarnished and only the Red Cloud knows."

She clutched her hair in her clenched hand;
She stood like a statue bronzed and grand;
Wakán-dee²² flashed in her fiery eyes;
Then swift as the meteor cleaves the skies,—
Nay, swift as the fiery Wakínyan's dart,—
She snatched the knife from the warrior's belt,
And plunged it clean to the polished hilt—
With a deadly cry—in the villain's heart.
Staggering he clutched the air and fell: