

may be preserved in health and strength, that medicine-plants and fruit trees may continue to grow, that game may be abundant for food and clothing, and he concludes with the self-righteous and unconsciously humorous wish, 'May the scent of the tobacco I have thrown on the fire reach Thee to let Thee know we are still good, and that Thou mayest give us all that we have asked'

With the introduction or adoption of the belief in a Great Spirit—"One, you know, that bosses all the other spirits, and the little peoples, and Ta-ion-ya-wá-gon, and Ongwehógon, you know," as a Seneca once explained to me—it became necessary to provide some means of communication between heaven and earth in addition to prayer and thanksgiving, which, alone, are somewhat too intangible for this purpose. The Burning of the White Dog was therefore seized as a fitting occasion for the sending of messages heavenwards. But this long antedates the appearance of Ska-ne-o-dy-o, who actually forbade the ceremony, probably because it was a subject of ridicule among white people. Notwithstanding both circumstances, our Canadian Iroquois pagans maintain the custom in connection with their annual New Year's dance at the time of the February new moon, when near the close of a ten days' celebration the master of ceremonies reverently says—

"Great Master, behold here all of our people who hold the old faith, and who intend to abide by it

"By means of this dog being burned we hope to please Thee, and that just as we have decked it with ribbons and beads, Thou wilt grant favours to us, Thy own people

"I now place the dog on the fire that its spirit may find its way to Thee who made it, and made everything, and by this means we hope to get all we want from Thee in return"

In full accordance with Indian belief, the spirit of the dog, on reaching Niyoh, will apprise him of the state of affairs on the earth, a belief that not only proves a want of faith in the adequacy of prayer alone, but which could not have had any reason for its existence before Rawen Niyoh himself was introduced to "boss all the other spirits". But the killing, burning, or sacrifice of a white dog has always, and everywhere over the northern part of our continent, possessed some mysterious influence. In my archaeological report for 1898 I have taken some pains to summarise our knowledge of this custom, whereby it appears that not only with the Iroquois, but among the Algonkian, Athabaskan, and Siouan peoples, as well as among the more highly cultured Aztecs, the custom of using such an animal in one or other of these ways was very generally observed.

It may suffice in this connection to state that in the opinion of General Clark, of Auburn, New York, who has made a special study of Iroquoian mythology, the white dog is now employed as a substitute for the white wolf, which formerly represented the sun, and Dr Brinton, quoting Von Tschudi, approves the statement of the latter that "white dogs were closely related with cosmogonical and culture myths" in many native religions.