

ATHAPASCANS, DÉNÉ, SARCEES

The Sarcees belong to the Athapascan stock. They came originally from the far north, possibly accompanying their present neighbors, the Blackfeet, with whom they have been on friendly terms. They were a fierce and warlike race, their hand being against all the other tribes. This incessant war reduced their numbers and carried off the best of the race. They lead an isolated life, as none of the other tribes can learn their language. The distribution of the Athapascan stock is very remarkable. In Canada there are the Chipewyans, about Lake Athabasca, the Tsekehne, on both sides of the Rockies, to which belong the Beavers, south of the Peace River. The Hare Indians, about the Mackenzie River, the Slaves, west of Great Slave Lake, the Yellow Knives, northeast of Great Slave Lake, the Dog Ribs, between Great Slave Lake and Great Bear Lake, and other tribes, besides the Navaho, in northern New Mexico and Arizona, who make the beautiful blankets, and are skilled in agriculture, the redoubted Apaches, in New Mexico, Arizona and Colorado, who were the main agents in destroying the early civilization in the Valleys of the Gila, and who in recent years defied alike the armies of Mexico and the United States. Besides these there are other tribes widely scattered.

Vide: Brinton—The American Race. Chamberlain—Ethnology of the Aborigines. Father Morice—History of British Columbia.

- 54 **HEAD CHIEF LITTLE CHIEF, TÇILLĀH**—Called Bull Head, Stumixotokon. He related his history to an old Sarcee, who painted it on a buffalo robe for the writer. He was the youngest of six brothers, Little Chief, who was the head chief, Stinking Pond, Big Plume and Many Kootenay (twins), Painted Otter and Bull Head. The second, fourth and fifth were killed by the Crees and at Vermilion Creek there was a great battle. At first the Sarcees won, but Little Chief said he would fight again. This time the Crees were victors. They returned to Fort Pitt and held a great dance. The chiefs said they had heard in the Sarcee dance, Little Chief singing, but the song ended in a wail, and they could not account for it. It was not the chief, but his youngest brother, who had the same voice, and mourned