

on the fourth day. He did not profess that he had seen the Great Spirit, but only the four beings who were commissioned by the Great Spirit to deliver His message. These were young men, dressed in the height of Indian fashion, and carrying bows and arrows. Here we have a compromise and a correspondence, the former as to the number, and the latter as to the office, for Christian teaching always introduces a medium of communication between the Creator and His people. As a matter of course, the four persons were Indians, and behaved in Indian manner, for otherwise the appeal to Indian minds would have lost much of its effect. Still Ska-ne-o-dy-o perceived clearly enough that his people required a new gospel—one that would correspond in a measure to the altered circumstances in which they found themselves, and that would, to some extent, place them on a level with white men. Himself, no doubt, unaware that a belief in the Great Spirit was one of comparatively recent acquirement, he urged the people to offer prayers to Niyoh, the Creator, but he adds a touch of Indian anthropomorphism when he teaches that all such addresses must be made before noon, on the ground that as the Great Spirit goes to sleep in the afternoon, he cannot then hear anything said to Him. These prayers were nearly an adjunct to the old-time dances, which were to be maintained, for the angels said to Ska-ne-o-dy-o, "You must worship Niyoh, the Great Spirit, by dancing the turtle-dance at the new moon when the strawberry ripens. At the new moon of the green corn you shall give a thanksgiving-dance. In the midwinter at the new moon you shall give another thanksgiving-dance. You shall have a thanksgiving-dance at the new moon at the time of making sugar. You shall dance at the new moon of planting-time, and pray for a good harvest. You shall dance at the new moon of the harvest-time, and give thanks for what the Great Spirit has given you." Among primitive peoples dancing is itself, as a distinguished writer has said, "praying with the feet." Oral prayer was therefore, largely, the result of European influence, something with which the Indian had become to some extent acquainted, and something that was of comparatively easy assimilation.

Even the matter of the prayers, however, is in the nature of a compromise for the addresses to the Great Spirit are rather in the form of requests that He will command other entities to do their duty, the performance of which, but for His orders, might be done either reluctantly or not at all. Take, for example, bearing in mind, meanwhile, the animism which pervades the Indian mind, the following petitions in the prayer which is used at the Burning of the White Dog in connection with the New Year festival —

"We ask that the sun will continue to shine on us and make all things grow

"We ask that the moon may always give us light by night

"We ask that the clouds may never cease to give us rain and snow

"We ask that the winds may always blow

"We ask that the trees and plants may always grow.

"We ask that Thou wouldst send all sorts of animals for food and clothing, and make the birds increase in number."