

INFORMATION ON THE DIVINE GIFT OF CORN TO THE ARIKARA,  
AND OF CEREMONIES OF RELIGIOUS WORSHIP WHEN  
THE HUKAWIRAT SACRED BUNDLE IS OPENED\*

The Arikara tribe is the northernmost of the Caddoan stock, and is closely affiliated to the Pawnee. Both have progressed along the same line of migration from the south to the north, but the Arikara seem to have been always the pioneers in the movement and as they moved on farther and farther north the Pawnee followed on and successively occupied the regions previously occupied by the Arikara until the four tribes of the Pawnee finally occupied the regions lying in the drainage basins of the Republican River, the Platte River and the Loup River, while the Arikara moved on northward up the course of the great river which both the Pawnee and Arikara call the Mysterious River, or Holy River, but which white people call [the] Missouri River.

Finally, at the time the power of the white man was imposed upon the country the villages of the Arikara were located near the mouth of Grand River on the west side of the Missouri River. Their dwellings were permanent houses of the well-known type of architecture of the Caddoan culture. They practiced agriculture, and indeed were the premier farmers in all the vast Missouri River region. They had brought with them from their ancient southern home the cultivated crops of corn, beans, sunflowers, tobacco, squashes and pumpkins and gourds, had acclimatized them to the shortened seasons and diminished temperature of the northern plains. And they were the missionaries and teachers of agriculture to all their neighbors, the various stranger tribes with which they came in contact. And they disseminated among these neighboring foreign tribes seed stock of their own crops and taught them how to plant and tend them. They also taught these other tribes their architecture, pottery, and other arts of living. All this is borne out by their own traditions, and is confirmed in the traditions of these other tribes, in which acknowledgment is made of the cultural debt owed to the Arikara and Pawnee.

And well might these ruder tribes give tribute to the more highly civilized tribes of the Caddoan race, for these possessed arts and crafts, a body of philosophy and of unwritten literature, religious ritual,

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\* Told to Melvin R. Gilmore, July, 1925, by Four-rings, a sub-chief of the Arikara tribe, residing southeast of Elbowoods, North Dakota.

ethical teaching, political organization and law which indicate a long settled tribal life of diligent labor and meditative thought.

The Arikara say that their tribe was much more populous in ancient time before they were devastated by wars and disease consequent to the coming of the white men. They say that the tribe comprised twelve villages.

Each village, in its religious organization, possessed what was called a Sacred Bundle. The Sacred Bundles were committed to the care of men who might be called their priests. The priests felt the gravity and responsibility of their station. Their doctrines inculcated the principle that a priest must be dignified but kindly; he must be patient and long-suffering; he must be unselfish and self-abnegating, but courageous in defense of the rights of others, of any who suffered wrong or injustice; he must hold no grudges, he must have no envy nor malice in his heart, he must be forgiving toward those who wronged him, he must be magnanimous; never haughty and prideful, but humble and considerate. He must not allow himself ever to be drawn into bickering and strife, but always show an example of self-restraint.

As there were twelve villages of the Arikara tribe in ancient time there were twelve Sacred Bundles, each village having its own Bundle. When sacred mysteries were celebrated a Sacred Bundle was opened upon the altar in the Sacred Lodge, or Temple, and served by its keeper, or priest, and his assistant priests and acolytes. The assistant priests attended on the chief priest and assisted him in the ceremonies and studied to perfect themselves in the rituals so that they might be qualified to succeed him after his death. Thus all the sacred rituals were handed down from generation to generation.

The Sacred Bundle of which Four-rings is the priest is said to be the first or chief Bundle of the original twelve, and it is the one which must be used for the first corn planting festival in the springtime. This Bundle is called *Hukawirat*, which means East. In the ancient scheme of both the Pawnee and the Arikara, each village had its assigned geographical position, which was kept relatively the same throughout all their migrations. The designation of this Sacred Bundle as *Hukawirat* denotes the original position in the tribe, of the village to which it pertained. The Sacred Bundles, in their functions and in the veneration in which they were held by the people, analogically may be compared to the Ark of the Covenant of the

ancient Hebrews.

It is said that in the primitive time, which is described in the “Arikara Book of Genesis,” before the human race had received the blessings and had made the attainments which are now enjoyed, when people lived in the crudest manner, sustaining themselves as best they could, having no cultivated crops, using for food the wild fruits, seeds, nuts, stems, leaves, roots and tubers of wild plants in a state of nature, a woman was blessed in a vision given from God. The woman thus favored was shown a vision of better things for the future. [In her vision she was given to see a wonderful plant, different from any of the wild plants of which the people at that time made their food. The wonderful plant of her vision was different and yet was remotely similar to a certain species of grass, the blue stem, which grew luxuriantly in the meadows of the moist and fertile valleys of the streams.]

At the same time the woman beheld the vision she heard a voice. The voice directed her to go out and clear off a space of ground and break up the surface very thoroughly. The voice also told her to work the soil then with her hands and make it very fine and mellow. It was promised that when she had done so she would see a plant growing in the ground she had worked. She was told that she would see four stages of growth in the plant. These stages were: first, a tender sprout shooting through the ground; second, a stalk with joints and leaves, standing and swaying and dancing like a graceful and merry young girl, the green leaves streaming like gay ribbons in the breeze; third, the stalk standing tall, slender and graceful, straight and supple from the root to the top, the upper part of the body displaying a gracefully rounded portion over which streamed a glossy, flowing, silky growth like long tresses of smooth, bright hair from the head of a young woman flowing over her shoulders and rounded bosom, while the top of the plant bore a tassel like a beautifully ornamented bonnet; fourth, the full-grown plant of corn with all its parts. The before unknown plant now with its slender, rounded, graceful body, plump corn-ears with their glossy silks, the gay tassel at the top, the long, ribbon-like leaves, the whole plant body now inclining, now buoyantly rising in the light wind, with the murmuring sound of the leaves in the light breeze like a rippling, musical laugh, appeared like a wonderfully beautiful young woman in full and lovely development, with slender, supple body, full-bosomed, and with dark smooth, lustrous tresses waving down over the roundness of that

bosom, dressed in elegant green fabric and bright ribbons, and with a fine feathered bonnet upon her head.

While the woman who was thus blessed in her dream remained beholding the beauty of the vision she heard a voice, the Voice of Mother Corn, speaking to her. And as she hearkened the Voice said to her:

*This shall be food and medicine for you and for your people, to give you life in your generation and for generations to come. I will be to your people the Giver of Life, to feed the hungry and to cure the sick. I will be faithful to my promise forever if you and your people on your part faithfully perform your duties to me according to my instructions. If you will lovingly and with care and diligence prepare the ground and plant the corn, tend it and protect it from all enemies, from marauding animals, from thieving birds and voracious insects, and if you gather the corn at the end of summer and prepare and store it away for the winter, truly it will feed you and your children.*

And the Voice told the woman to open the husks of the ear of corn upon the stalk, and to behold the gift of food there for the people. So the woman in her dream reverently opened the protecting and concealing husks as she might draw aside the folds of a robe, and when she did so she beheld the bounty and the beauty of the corn, swelling rounded and full like a maiden's breasts, delicate as the petals of a white rose and softly lustrous as a pearly shell, while the surrounding air became permeated with a delicious and exquisite odor.

And, being invited by the Voice, the woman pressed it with her lips, and there issued a delicious fluid like the primal food of the human race.

And the Voice again was speaking and saying, "The corn shall be forever for your people for their health and comfort, for the perfect sustenance of their life from infancy to old age. It shall nourish the helpless infant and shall build up wholesome bodies of the youth; it will sustain your young men in the strength and power of their manhood, and it will revive the failing strength of your aged ones when the feebleness of age creeps upon them."

The woman hearkened to the Voice and regarded the vision with admiration and wonder in her heart, and pondered it thoughtfully. And Mother Corn not only favored this woman with this marvelous vision and these words of counsel and of promise, but she also bestowed upon her the divine gift of seed of

this wonderful plant, so that the hopeful promise might be fulfilled to the people by the fruits of their labor in planting and tending their fields.

Afterwards the woman publicly recounted to the people the revelation and the favor which had been manifested to her, and the blessing which she had received in the divine gift of the wonderful plant which had been granted to her from Mother Corn.

It has been told from ancient time that the original Arikara corn was white speckled with many colors, carrying the potentialities of all the different varieties of corn now in the world, for it is said that it was ordained that the Arikaras should share with other people the favor Mother Corn had granted to their nation, and so the blessing should be passed on from the Arikara to all the tribes of mankind all over the world by the dissemination of corn grown year after year in succession from the original seed which Mother Corn gave to the woman whom she favored. And so in many different places, among various nations, many and different varieties of corn have developed in various conditions of climate and soil by the isolation and recombination of characteristics latent in the original Arikara corn from which all these many varieties in the world have emanated.

The Voice of Mother Corn, speaking to the woman, said to her, "Because I have had compassion toward you and have wished to show you favor I have given you life, my own life. And in my gift to you I have provided all that is necessary for your food and for your medicine, and not only for you, but for all creatures. I am the life and the giver of life, to you and to all creatures, for human beings and all animals, birds and insects may live from me. You shall pray in my name. When you are in need or have desire for anything, if you ask of God above in my name, you shall have it, but those who do not believe in me shall be in want. If one of your children is sick, or if you desire the growth and prosperity of your children you shall pray for them in my name. Your children should be watched and given tender care as I have taught you to tend and lovingly care for the growing corn. Your children's characters should be cultivated, they should be taught and instructed and their feet set in the right way of life.

Everything you have on earth is given from God above. Be ye thankful always. When you partake of food first give thanks that the food may be blessed to your use.

While the corn is in the field storms of wind and hail may come and strike down the corn to the ground, but from the grains fallen there life shall rise again another year. So shall your own lives be. You may be stricken down by sickness, and you may even die; but death shall not destroy you. As I live so shall your life also continue forever. My seed shall live as long as the world lasts, but I shall vanish from sight and go back to God above.”

Mother Corn promised protection from danger and evil, and from enemy people and from dangerous animals. It is said that at one time there were many wicked, disorderly and unbelieving people. These wicked people were punished by a plague of venomous snakes which bit many of the people. Then a star was seen in the sky, and a voice was heard speaking from a house where an ear of Mother Corn was hanging on the wall. The voice said, “Come to me and you shall be safe.” Those who believed crowded in where Mother Corn was, and there they were saved; but those mocked and were unbelieving, and did not come to Mother Corn, were destroyed. So those who survived were thankful and believed firmly on Mother Corn and trusted in her.

It has been said that Mother Corn promised to provide food for human beings throughout the whole life from tender infancy until the feebleness of age has come. Even for a young infant, when the mother has not a sufficient flow of milk a suitable food may be prepared from corn which is not beyond the stage of maturity which is called “corn in the milk.” At this stage the grains are filled out but not yet hardened, and when pressed the sap exudes as a sweet white liquid which resembles a woman’s milk. At this stage the corn may be scraped from the ear, cooked, and then drained. When this liquid has been allowed to cool it is suitable as food for the infant. Corn in the milk stage was scraped off and dried and stored away for future also, just as was done with corn in the roasting-ear stage. Corn dried at this tender young stage would then be on hand in storage, ready for use for baby food if needed at any time of the year when the fresh corn could not be had.

Mother Corn gave instructions about the way of preparing the ground for planting, and also how to tend the corn while it was growing, and how to harvest and store it for safe-keeping, and how to select the seed corn. These instructions were necessary, because the people at first were ignorant of the nature and

the needs of this wonderful plant. They had seen wild plants growing without human care, and they did not know that corn needed any care, or that human beings could do anything to make conditions more favorable for corn to grow. A woman planted a field of corn and waited and watched for it to grow. She knew not how to tend it. She was instructed to make a bone hoe from the shoulder-blade of a buffalo. She was told to grind the broad end of this bone on a rough stone until it was sharp, and then to bind with a rawhide thong the narrow end to a wooden handle made from a forked branch of a box-elder tree. She was taught how to work the ground with this hoe, and to make mounds in which to plant the corn in groups like families of human beings dwelling in the round, earth-covered houses in which our people dwell.

A field was planted and left untended as an example of the evil result of leaving undone the things which Mother Corn had directed should be done for the corn. This served as a forceful contrast to the results in a field which was tended according to the instructions of Mother Corn. In the well-tended field the corn grew and thrived and seemed to be happy and dancing and singing blithely in the breeze. But in the neglected field the corn grew poorly, and was stunted and sickly and sad and drooping in appearance, and the sounds which came from it were sounds of melancholy and complaining of its doleful condition.

This served as an object lesson for the people, so then they realized and heeded the instructions which Mother Corn had given for the care of the growing corn. And so the people have come to feel a great affection for corn, and to tend it with diligent and studious care as they do for loved relatives.

Mother Corn said that there is one thing necessary to all life, to her own life and to the life of all vegetation, and of human beings and of all animal life, and that is water. Without water all things must soon perish. But Mother Corn promised that this great boon should not be wanting. It is given from the Thunder, one of God's helpers and guards on earth, and to this beneficent Power is dedicated the southwest quarter of the horizon. So smoke offerings are made to The Thunder at the southwest quarter of the circle in recognition of the gift of the water of life. So it is said that The Thunder is Mother Corn's father, the father of her physical body on earth.

In order that they might properly show their gratitude for divine gifts the people were instructed how they should pray and offer worship. They were to return thanks for blessings already received, and to

implore blessings for the future, acknowledging their dependence upon the divine bounty for all that they had of good; for necessary food, clothing and shelter, for health and strength and for security from enemies.

The woman who had been favored by the vision and the gift of seed from Mother Corn, and instructions in the planting and tending of the corn, was also instructed in the prayers and songs and dances which were proper to give in recognition of these wonderful gifts. And as the woman was instructed by Mother Corn so she instructed others. Thus were instituted the ceremonies and rituals of the Sacred Bundles in honor of Mother Corn for the wonderful gifts and wise doctrines given from God through Mother Corn as we have them to this day.

Mother Corn said, "Whenever you hold these ceremonies and celebrate these mysteries through all the future time you shall open the Sacred Bundle and display the sacred objects to the reverent view of the people, and I shall be with you in spirit. And you shall recite to the people the instructions which I have given you, declaring how these wonderful gifts have come by divine favor and have been cherished by your ancestors and faithfully passed on from generation to generation through the ages. And you shall make offerings and gifts in token of your thanksgiving for these divine favors. And on these occasions you shall exhort the people according to my precepts on the right way of living in order to peace and happiness, and also to remind parents of their responsibilities toward their children, that the children's feet may be set in the right path in life."

There are three seasons when these ceremonies of Mother Corn are to be held; first, in the spring when the corn is coming up and shows the first two or three leaves. At this time when the mysteries are celebrated prayers shall be made especially for gentle showers of warm rain, and that no frost shall come to kill the young corn, and that cutworms and other harmful insects shall not destroy it.

Second, when the corn is just beginning to form ears. Then prayers shall still be made for rain, so needful at that time for the corn; also prayers shall then be made that storms of wind and hail may be averted.

Third, when the new corn is ready for eating. At this time prayers of thanksgiving shall be made for the crop, and offerings shall be made to all the four quarters of the universe in recognition of their favor

and aid: to the southeast, the vivifying Sun, and all vegetation so friendly, pleasing and helpful to mankind; to the southwest, the Thunder, giver of the rains, and Buffalo, so useful to us in so many ways; to the northwest, the Wind, for the refreshing airs, and the wonder and mystery of all its movements; to the northeast, Mother Corn, through whose mediation so many and such great favors have come to us; to the Holy Cedar Tree, symbol of everlasting life, and to the Rock, symbol of perpetuity and endurance, firm through the ages, through heat and cold, through storm and flood, steadfast in strength and quiet; to God above, who upholds and sustains all things, and to Mother Earth who brings forth and who nourishes all living things.

In the organization for the celebration of the feast and mysteries, of Mother Corn there are eleven men who officiate. These are the priest or keeper of the Sacred Bundle, and four assistants; four criers, the fire-tender, and the herald. The priest and his assistants attend the altar, open the Sacred Bundle and display the sacred relics, hold the five gourd rattles pertaining to the Bundle, recite the prayers and sing the songs of the ritual. The four criers announce the names of the donors and the nature of the gifts which are brought to Mother Corn.

The office of fire-tender devolves upon the man who furnishes the meat for the offerings and the feast. A man who has a desire to do a public service in the name of Mother Corn pledges himself to provide the fees and the necessary requirements of a public feast for this purpose. He goes on a hunt to provide the meat for the feast and the offerings necessary to the opening of a Sacred Bundle. At the moment when he makes the kill he makes a prayer which is a vow of devotion to this purpose. The words of his prayer are: "The animal I have killed is holy, devoted, Mother Corn's ceremony is holy." On the day of the celebration of the feast he comes to the holy lodge carrying on his shoulders his offering. He proceeds to a position before the altar, and facing the fireplace. There he lets fall from his shoulders the offering he has brought for sacrifice, and receives the blessing of the priest. It is his duty and great honor to be the fire-tender for the occasion, to see that the necessary fuel is provided, and also to receive and place before the altar the gifts which are brought by the people to the holy lodge for Mother Corn. He also gives to the donors the blessing of Mother Corn when they bring their gifts, and he "wipes away the tears" of any

who may be overcome by weeping. He is also the pipe-tender during the ceremonies.

The herald proclaims through the village the time when the celebration is to be held, and he also proclaims the program of the events during the progress of the ceremonies.

It is said that in ancient times these eleven were illuminated by mysterious light upon their heads, a light from that great star which appeared in the sky when Mother Corn made her revelations. These eleven are representative of the eleven martyrs who sacrificed their lives in defense of Mother Corn on the occasion of the expedition which she led at the time of her visit to the people in bodily form and presence as a woman. The twelfth man in that expedition, who saved his own life and escaped, is not represented. But these eleven, who officiate in the ceremonies represent the eleven who gave up their lives for Mother Corn, and they carry her power and blessing and wear a bit of white down on the head, representing that mysterious light of the ancients.

There were in ancient time twelve villages in the Arikara tribe, and each village had its Sacred Bundle. Any one of these Sacred Bundles might be opened on the altar for the celebration of the mysteries of Mother Corn, but it is said the Sacred Bundle of *Hukawirat*, which was the first or chief Sacred Bundle, is the one which must be used for the first ceremony made in the springtime, when the young corn is just showing the first leaves.

When the ceremonies of Mother Corn are to be given, the story of the origin and progressive development and improvement of all life in the world is told in the Holy Lodge. This story begins at the condition of darkness and chaos and proceeds with the improvement and advancement of all forms of life, the first appearance and consequent development of human intellect; the primeval, arduous and rude conditions of human life, and the subsequent happier conditions resultant from human culture.

This story is recited at length in the Holy Lodge on the night before the mysteries of Mother Corn are to be celebrated. As a visual and mnemonic aid in the telling of the story there is employed a bundle of thirty-four small sticks of sandbar willow. These thirty-four sticks are laid down in certain positions in a circle about the fireplace as described elsewhere in the account given of the Arikara Book of Genesis. These thirty-four sticks are laid in groups relating to the four quarters of the universe, each of the four

groups having a collective meaning, and each individual stick in a group having its particular significance. Suffice to say here that the group of sticks at the southeast quarter pertains to the Sunrise and to Vegetation; the group at the southwest pertains to the Thunder and to the Buffalo; the group at the northwest pertains to the Wind and all Powers of the Air; the group at the northeast pertains to Night the Restorer, and to Mother Corn the Mediator, and to the stages of Human Progress.

Preliminary to the celebration of the Mother Corn ceremony, or any other religious festival of the Arikara, the so-called "Sage Dance" is performed. This is a ceremony of purification. It is called the Sage Dance because of the dominant importance of the so-called wildsage (*Artemisia gnaphalodes*) in this ritual. Part of the requirement of the Sage Dance was that all those who participated in the performance of its ritual must bathe as a preparatory act and must fast from sunrise to sunset.

As the midseason celebration of the Mother Corn mysteries, that is, when the corn is just beginning to shoot ears, and when squashes are in bloom, this festival may be preceded by the Holy Cedar Tree ceremony, that of course, being preceded by the purification ceremony of the Sage Dance.

The ceremony of the Holy Cedar Tree is in effect an act of worship of the principles of life, employing the cedar tree as a symbol of everlasting life. This ritual is built upon an allusion in the Arikara Book of Genesis heretofore mentioned. It is a ritual which is very beautiful in poetic and philosophic concept and dramatic representation.

In this ceremony a cedar tree is brought in from the place where it grew, is consecrated and erected in front of the holy lodge at the north side of the Standing Rock, to which object reverence is also paid in this ceremony. There the tree stands, a witness and participant with the people in the celebration of the festival of Mother Corn and in all their joys and sorrows during the remainder of the year until the next spring when winter is past, the spring has come, the pasque flowers are blooming, and the ice has gone out of the river. Then the people come and fasten to its branches the worn out moccasins of their little children, and take up the tree and carry it in religious procession down to the Mysterious River (which white people call the Missouri River) and there consign it to the current of the stream, so that it may drift down past all the old Arikara village sites, carrying to them the message that the Arikara nation still survives, and

still remembers the teachings of the ancients, and that it still has hope for the future, as attested by the worn little moccasins of the oncoming generation. Besides the worn baby moccasins, symbolic of the promise of continuity of the tribe, they may also attach to the branches of the Holy Cedar Tree blossoms of the pasque flower (*Pulsatilla patens*), symbolic of the promise of the returning springtime, and the reawakening of all forms of life to renewed activity and to triumph over the death and darkness and cold of winter.

After the preliminary purification ceremony, the "Sage Dance," has been performed, the mysteries of Mother Corn may properly be celebrated. The day before this event preparations are made by the slaughter of the beef for the feast and sacrifice, and the carcass is ceremonially cut up.

During the night preceding the day of the celebration the bowl of holy mush for use in the next day's mysteries is prepared in the Holy Lodge. First, the Sacred Bundle is incensed. For this purpose, the priest takes up a bit of dried sweetgrass in his hand, offers it toward the east, and then lays it upon the bed of coals brought from the fireplace to a place before the altar. The priest then takes up the Sacred Bundle and incenses it in the smoke of the sweetgrass. During this preliminary ceremony, prayer was made that they might have on the morrow a cool day and gentle rain without any stormy winds.

Then the corn meal is placed in a wooden bowl and it and the mussel shell from the Sacred Bundle, which is used for dipping the meal, are carried by the priest around the fireplace. Now the four assistants of the priest sit down about the bowl of meal in the relative positions of the four quarters of the universe, and the representative of them. These four men then offer, in their turn, smoke to the four quarters. The priest then takes the bowl of meal and gives it to the woman whose office it is to cook it. While the mush is being cooked, two sets of songs of worship are sung. During the singing of these songs, the woman is continually stirring the mush in the pot over the fire.

When the mush is cooked, it is taken up by the priest and placed before the altar. Then the four assistants of the priest, representing the four quarters of the universe, draw four lines, each man a line, on the surface of the mush in the bowl. Using the mussel shell, they draw these lines two in each direction at right angles to the other two, as the thong which binds the covering of the Sacred Bundle is drawn in two

lines crossing two other lines at right angles around the Bundle.

Then the priest takes from the Sacred Bundle the sacred relic mace and carries it sunwise, i.e., turning to the right, and places this sacred relic at the base of the southwest post of the lodge and leaves it there. Going back to the altar, he delegates one of his assistants to take it up and carry it round the circle, pausing at each quarter post to sing appropriate songs.

When the cooking of the mush is finished it is turned out into the wooden bowl and the priest announces that the mush is now prepared and that it is blessed by the spirit of Mother Corn, and that when her personal presence disappeared from human sight she left this as her body on earth in remembrance of herself forever. Then the usual smoke offerings are made again, and this completes the ritual of the preparation of the mush.

In the morning of the day of the festival of Mother Corn, the herald announces from the roof of the holy lodge the orders of the day. The feast-giver, the man who has provided the sacrifice and requested the “opening of the Sacred Bundle,” comes to the Holy Lodge, with that part of the carcass of the beef which is to be made an offering to God, bound upon his shoulders. He is accompanied by his assistants and by the priest. They enter and pass on the south side of the fireplace to a position in front of the altar at the west and facing the fireplace. Then he loosens and the thong which binds it, and drops the offering from his shoulders to the ground before the stalk of corn, representing Mother Corn, which lies in front of the altar. This offering consists of the tongue, trachea, lungs and heart of the beef, removed from the carcass in one piece.

When the feast-giver has dropped the offering before the altar, he stands there while the priest brushes him with a wisp of wild sage (*Artemisia gnaphaloides*) from head to foot down the right side, back, left side, and front. The priest then addresses the feast-giver, making recognition of the offering, which he has made before the Sacred Bundle and before God. And he expresses to him the thanks of the people for giving them this opportunity to participate in the ceremony in honor of Mother Corn, and for the blessings which this will bring to all.

Then he prays to God on behalf of the feast-giver, invoking the divine aid to make straight his path

in life, and that he may prosper and have success in all his undertakings, that he may have health and strength and enjoy a long and happy life until the time shall come when he is ready to die.

In arranging the holy lodge for the ceremonies of Mother Corn, the following order is observed. The earthen altar is at the west. On this, the Sacred Bundle, which is used for the occasion, is laid open with its contained relics displayed in order. On the wall at the rear of the altar, the other Sacred Bundles of the tribe are suspended. A fire is burning in the central fireplace. The meat donated by the feast-giver for the feast is piled at a little distance to the northeast of the northeast lodge post. The special meat offering to God, consisting of the tongue, trachea, lungs and heart, is placed between the fireplace and the altar at the west, laid out with the tongue toward the fireplace. Around the fireplace thirty-four wands of sandbar willow are laid, grouped according to the grouping of the thirty-four small sticks in the diagrammatic arrangement for the recital of the Arikara Book of Genesis. These willow wands are about six feet in length, are freshly cut, a tuft of twigs and green leaves left on the top, and the base is pointed so that they can be stuck into the ground, which is their ultimate purpose. As they are here laid in groups circling about the fireplace, the bases point outward and the tops inward toward the center. A small piece of meat is spitted on each of these thirty-four wands, as an offering to the element or principle represented by the wand in its relative position in the grouping.

At the earthen altar the Sacred Bundle lies open, the five large gourd rattles lie just back of it with handles toward the rear, i.e., toward the priest and his assistants; in front of it are four ears of corn leaned up against the altar and the Sacred Bundle; to the right (south) in front of the altar is a mussel shell serving as a dish to contain tobacco of the Arikara kind (*Nicotiana quadrivalvis*) mixed with inner bark of red dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*) for use in the sacred relic pipe to make the required smoke offerings. A little to the right of it is a braid of dried sweetgrass to burn for incense.

At the left (north) in front of the altar is a bundle of thirty-four slender sticks about eighteen inches long, of sandbar willow. These small sticks serve to lay out the diagram made on occasion for reciting the Arikara account of genesis.

Immediately in front of the altar lies a peculiar object of wood, shaped somewhat like a Roman

short sword, flat and broad, and about two feet long. The handle of this wooden sword, or mace, is toward the right (south) of the altar, and the blade toward the left (north). The wood of which this object is made is called in the Arikara language *atina-natis*, which means "Mother wood." The species of tree thus designated has not been identified yet. It does not grow in the north where the Arikara now reside. This object is an ancient relic from their former more southern home, where they lived several centuries ago.

Next directly in front of the altar is a frame formed by tying together seven slender sticks to form a frame or rack. To form this rack two sticks were laid parallel at a distance of about eighteen or twenty inches apart. Across these two was laid a third stick at right-angles and firmly tied, forming three sides of a quadrangle. Two such figures were formed, and the seventh stick was then firmly tied at each end to the middle of each cross stick, thus forming a rack on the four upright supports. On this rack were then laid three bows and three arrows.

Next toward the fireplace beyond the bow rack in front of the altar, toward the fireplace, were placed two small billets of wood. On these rested the great relic pipe of the Sacred Bundle. The bowl of pipe was toward the left (north) of the altar, and its mouthpiece toward the right (south). This relic pipe is of larger size and longer stem than ordinary Arikara tobacco pipes. The bowl is of red pipestone (catlinite) and the stem of ash wood.

At the left (north) of the bow rack three relic bone hoes out of the Sacred Bundle were placed, standing on the ground, handles upward.

At the right-hand (south) side and a little to the front of the altar stood the bowl of consecrated mush.

At the rear against the wall and just above the altar was suspended horizontally a pole, while five sandbar willow rods, about six feet long, stood vertically against the wall behind the horizontally suspended pole.

When the *Hukawirat* Sacred Bundle is used in a ceremony, the fire-tender and pipe-tender have their station on the north side instead of the south side of the fireplace. During the time of the ceremonies it is contrary to rule for any smoking to be done except within the holy lodge at the stated periods provided

in the progress of the ceremonies. Therefore, the pipes of individuals are collected and placed at the station of the pipe-tender, who fills and distributes them, and after the period of smoking collects them again.

During the ceremonies of preparation on the night previous to the celebration to the celebration of the mysteries of Mother Corn they had prayed for a cool, serene day, with gentle rain and without stormy wind. The day came, cool, the sky softly veiled with light clouds, some light sprinkling of raindrops came now and again, and as the ceremonies progressed, a gentle, refreshing shower of rain fell.

At the beginning of the ceremonies of Mother Corn, one of the assistants of the priest stood forth before the altar and sang a song. (The words, music, and meaning of the songs have not been obtained yet.) After this singing the priest lighted a pipe and made smoke offerings to all the Four Quarters of the circle of the universe, to all the groups of willow wands laid in the four quarters of the circle, then to the meat offering to God above. After smoke had been offered to all the Powers, the pipe was passed round to all participants in the ceremonies; then, when smoked out, the pipe was emptied out in the Holy Place, which is between the altar and the fireplace. When the ashes were emptied out the pipe was handed to one of the assistant priests who cleaned it and put it away.

Next, the priest took position just to the north of the northeast quarter of the lodge circle, which is the quarter dedicated to Mother Corn and the sixteen stages of human progress. Standing here the priest recited the Arikara account of genesis and advancement, pointing with his right thumb, and not with index finger, toward each station and group of the wands as it was mentioned in the recital.

After this recital thirty-four boys were appointed, one for each of the wands. These boys were placed in a circle about the fireplace, each regarding the willow wand directly before him in the circle about the fireplace, and he was instructed in his duty, which was to take up the wand with its attached bit of meat as an offering, and carry the wand out and set it in the ground in the same relative position on the prairie in a circle about the village as it had within the lodge in the circle about the fireplace. And he was instructed to say a prayer of devotion of the offering to the particular power to which it was dedicated.

Then I, as the feast-giver, accompanied by one of the four assistants of the priest, took up the relic

pipe, and the assistant priest took up the meat offering to God above, and carried it out to a place in front of the Holy Lodge, followed in procession by the boys bearing the willow wands with the bits of meat attached as offerings to all the Powers. Here all knelt down or crouched in the same relative positions as they had before the altar and encircling the fireplace in the lodge. The assistant priest lighted the pipe and made the smoke offerings to all the Powers, then offered the mouthpiece to me as the feast giver that I might draw smoke from it in communion and bless myself from the sacred relic. Smoke from the pipe was blown toward the meat offering, the ashes were emptied and touched to the tongue, the trachea, lungs and heart. A prayer was said of devotion of the offering to God. The relic pipe was handed to me, the feast-giver, to carry back into the lodge and lay it to rest on the billets of wood provided for that purpose before the altar.

When I had replaced the sacred pipe on the wooden billets provided for that purpose I was conducted to a position in the rear of the Sacred Bundle, and facing it, with my back against the west wall of the holy lodge. Then the long pole before mentioned, which was suspended against the wall, was placed across in front of me, and I was directed to grasp the pole with both hands with the ends of my two thumbs touching each other. Standing thus, with the pole in my two hands, a rope, doubled to make a loop, was passed around the pole, binding to it my two thumbs. While I stood thus, bound to the pole, which extended across my body in front, one of the assistant priests stood in front of me and made to me a laudatory address for my generosity in providing for the festival of Mother Corn, and commending me to the Powers above, praying that I might be blessed accordingly.

When he had finished his address to me I was released from the bond which held me to the pole and sat down in my place in the lodge. The pole was then suspended against the wall at the rear of the altar by the rope looped about it at three equal distances. Five peeled wands or staffs of willow about six feet long were stood behind the pole against the wall.

The boys all ran away in all directions each to stick into the ground his willow wand, bearing its bit of meat as an offering, in its proper relative position in the circle on the prairie about the village, and there to say the prayer of devotion as he had been instructed. The boys' part then was done, and they returned at will to the holy lodge, or went elsewhere if they wished.

The bowl of mush which had been ceremonially prepared, and which was resting on the ground at the front and right of the altar was now carried out of the holy lodge to a tent near by, there to remain until the time of a certain stage in the progress of the ceremonies. At that time it is to be brought back into the holy lodge. When it does so return it comes representing the approach of an enemy.

After the bowl of mush was carried out, and before its return into the lodge, an old man arose and made a short address to the assembly in the form of a hortatory and encouraging discourse, dwelling on the good effects to come from this celebration. It is right and proper thus to give honor to Mother Corn and to show gratitude for the gifts which we have and do now enjoy. It is highly commendable in the feast-giver, the one who has made the occasion and provided the offerings and the feast, so that this festival could be celebrated. It is commendable also in all those who have come bringing gifts to donate in the name of Mother Corn. All of us who do so take part in this observance assuredly will be blessed in health and happiness and prosperity.

Then one of the assistants of the priest sang a song of invocation to the Powers in behalf of the feast-giver, *Pahok*, recounting his dangers and labors in providing the meat for the offerings and for the feast for Mother Corn, and bespeaking for him the favor of all the Powers, that they may guard him in health and safety in the path he travels, and to bless his undertakings.

(*Pahok* is my personal name in the Pawnee tribe, conferred on me in that tribe in 1914. The Arikara are of the same linguistic stock as the Pawnee, and the two tribes feel themselves to be akin. They know me by my Pawnee name, and always call me by it when I am among them.)

The allusion to the dangers and toils undergone by the feast-giver in obtaining the meat for the feast and offering is reminiscent of the ancient time, when, with poor weapons and without the aid of horses, the chase was very laborious and full of danger.

Here may be given a descriptive list of the objects contained in the *Hukawirat* Sacred Bundle, that being the one used on this occasion.

The outside wrapping of the Bundle is buffalo skin, cured with hair on. In wrapping the Bundle, the hair side of the covering is the inside. The cover is tied round with buffalo hide thongs passed about the

bundle twice lengthwise and twice crosswise, thus making four crossings of the binding thong on the upper side and four on the lower side of the Bundle.

Lengthwise of the upper side of the Bundle when tied up there extends a stick of some kind of wood, called *atina-natis* in the Arikara language. This name means "Mother-wood." I have not yet learned the identity of the species of tree from which this wood comes. It does not grow in the north where the Arikara have long resided, but was obtained in their ancient home somewhere south.

To this stick of "Mother-wood" are tied at equal intervals five large gourd rattles used in marking the cadence of the singing in the ritual, one for the priest and one for each of his four assistants at the altar. These gourd rattles, "Mother Gourds" as they are called, are made from the shells of large gourds with hard seeds or fine gravel to cause vibration, and with a short wooden handle, which extends diametrically through the gourd shell and is fastened by pieces of leather glued on.

There is also attached to the outside of the cover a bundle of thirty-four slender sticks about nine inches long, of peeled sandbar willow. These are to be used to lay out the diagram when the account of beginnings and progress of the world, or the "Book of Genesis" is recited.

Under the binding thong of the Sacred Bundle when it is tied up there is thrust a peculiar object made of "Mother-wood," highly polished, shaped somewhat like a Roman short sword about two and one half feet long.

When the Sacred Bundle was brought out for use on this occasion there were also attached to it a fresh whole plant of Arikara tobacco (*Nicotiana quadrivalvis*), and three braids of fresh sweet grass.

When the Sacred Bundle was opened, the relics contained in it were laid out in order and displayed to view upon the altar in order from west to east. These relics were the following objects:

1. A meat hook made from a hawk claw fastened to a stick of "Mother-wood" about two feet long and one half inch in diameter.
2. An enemy scalp fastened to a piece of hoof and attached to the end of a braided buffalo hair rope about eight feet long. Upon it was also fastened a round piece of elk hide. This scalp was said to be a Kiowa scalp taken in a battle with that tribe about the year 1830. There was

also a broken piece of a gunlock attached.

3. The peculiar object before mentioned, made of "Mother-wood," shaped like a short sword.
4. A sparrow hawk skin with two small shell beads for eyes. A scalp is tied to the bird skin.
5. A perfect ear of eight-rowed white flint corn.
6. Four white feathers. The species of bird is unidentified yet; it may be the white crane or the snow goose.
7. Skin of some species (unidentified yet) of hawk. The Arikara name is *nikritawikrisu*. A string attached two pouches of tobacco to this skin a small pouch and one a little larger. The pouches contain tobacco.
8. Another, larger, hawk skin.
9. One valve of a fresh-water mussel shell.
10. Another hawk skin on a pouch of tobacco.
11. The great sacred relic pipe. The bowl is of red pipestone (catlinite), of more than ordinary size. The stem, of ash wood, is about twenty inches long. The upper end of this stem is not carved flat horizontally to fit the lips of the smoker, as ordinary pipes are. About three inches from the upper end of the stem was fastened a split quill to which a piece of a scalp, a small bit of a red woolen blanket, and a small polished shell like a snail shell. In the carved stone of the pipe was a perforation by which it was tied with a thong to the wooden stem. On this thong was strung a copper or brass bead about two inches long and two Hudson Bay trade glass beads. The pipe is wrapped in a cardiac sac of a buffalo.
12. A perfect ear of white flint corn.
13. A skin of a small species (not identified yet) of owl. This bird skin is wrapped with a cord twined from the fiber of *Apocynum cannabinum*. A twig of "Mother-wood" is wrapped in with the owl skin because this owl is a forest dweller. A man who was going out leading a war party might petition the keeper of the Sacred Bundle and be permitted to take this object with him, tied to his hair, as an invocation to the guardian spirit of this species of owl for aid

to the success of his expedition.

14. The skin of a small mammal, apparently that of a raccoon.
15. The skin of a small sturgeon or gar-pike.
16. A mole-skin stuffed with buffalo hair.
17. The skin of another species of small owl, which lives in the woods. This owl skin was also wrapped, together with a small piece of "Mother-wood," with cord made from fiber of *Apocynum cannabinum*.
18. A perfect ear of white flint corn.
19. A skin of the prairie or burrow owl. Although this species of owl dwells on the prairie in the abandoned burrow of any small mammal, such as the prairie-dog or the badger, yet it is the Arikara belief that its ancestors dwelt in the woods, and that by an evolutionary process the habits of this species have become changed. So because of the belief that it was once also a forest dweller, as other owls are today, this skin is also wrapped, as are the others, in cord made from *Apocynum* fiber and with a piece of "Mother-wood." The twine in which this skin is wrapped is dyed red.
20. The skin of a bird which seems to resemble a kingfisher, but larger.
21. One valve of a fresh-water mussel shell similar to the one numbered 9 in this list. This shell is the one for containing tobacco for ritualistic smoking, while the other one, numbered 9, is used for containing the medicine which is used as described in the account given elsewhere of the ritual of "Comforting the Mourners." The tobacco used for the ritualistic smoking is the Arikara species, *Nicotiana quadrivalvis*. For this purpose, the preparation is of the seed capsules only, plucked green and dried.
22. The skin of a species of hawk, apparently Swainsons.
23. A perfect ear of white flint corn.
24. The skin of a species of hawk, apparently Swainson's hawk, attached to which is a small pouch to hold dried tobacco seed capsules.

25. A small parcel wrapped in calico. This parcel is to represent in miniature the entire Sacred Bundle. This miniature bundle contains a perfect ear of white flint corn closely encased in a cardiac sac drawn over it while fresh, so that as it dried it shrank closely about the ear and being very thin and clear, the ear of corn can be seen through it, as through a sheet of celluloid. Besides the ear of corn the miniature bundle contains a feather from each species of bird contained in the large Bundle, a small piece of the fiber cord, a small twig of "Mother-wood," and a whistle made from a wing bone of an eagle, to which is attached a bit of eagle feather down and a small pouch of some pulverized dried plant product, the species not yet identified.

When the people were pursued by an enemy and there was no time nor opportunity properly to open the great Sacred Bundle, then this miniature bundle was opened, the bone whistle was blown, and some of the vegetal powder was blown into the air. It was believed that this would affect the confusion of the enemy, who would then be unable to find and follow them. There was also in the miniature bundle a second small pouch of this vegetal powder, and another ear of corn wrapped in a cardiac membrane.

Several, at least five, of the bird skins of the great Bundle had skin envelopes for the bird skins. These were two skins of white tail deer fawns, two antelope's skins, and a bighorn skin.

Now, all being prepared, and those who were to officiate in the ritual being ready, this fact was proclaimed by the herald, and the people were bidden to come in for the ceremonies. They came eagerly, bringing their gifts for Mother Corn. Each donor presented his gift to the feast-giver and received the usual gestures of blessing. Each donor's name and gift was called aloud and the four announcers were kept busy running out and round the holy lodge sunwise, calling aloud the name of each donor and the nature of the gift, to all persons within hearing within and without the lodge, and to all the spiritual Powers of the four quarters of the horizon.

The gifts, which the people brought, were articles of clothing, shawls, featherwork, decorated moccasins, cloth, calico, food commodities, and all sorts of articles of value, as well as livestock, mostly horses. Horses were led in and presented, and then led out again. If a person wished to give a horse, and

the animal was at the time in some distant place, then a short stick was brought and handed over as a gage for the horse to be delivered at a later time.

One educated young woman of the tribe, who is employed in the U.S. Government Indian School at Pierre, South Dakota, and who was home on vacation, brought a horse as a gift, praying the favor of Mother Corn for herself, to comfort her in her loneliness and to protect her from any harm, stationed as she is so far away from home and kindred.

After a large number of gifts to Mother Corn had been brought and presented, a number of persons came, taking advantage of the occasion of the Sacred Bundle being open, to ask a priest to confer upon them, or upon minor children for whom they were sponsors, personal names in the tribe. One old woman brought her first great-grand-child, a baby born only a week or two before this to have it given a name. The priest gave it a name, which, translated into English, means Good-corn-gruel. This is one of the names in the ancient list of personal names pertaining to the *Hukawirat* Sacred Bundle, corresponding to our own list of Bible names or saints' names. Any priest of the ritual of a Sacred Bundle is qualified to perform the rite of conferring a personal name. He proclaims, to all persons and to all Powers of the universe, that the person present is hereafter to be known by the name which he here declares; and he prays [to] all the Powers for their protection and blessing of such one.

The candidate for a name presented himself, or if a child, was presented by a relative, in person before the priest stationed between the altar and the fireplace. Then, when the priest proclaimed the name which was given, he either lifted the stalk of Mother Corn which lay there before the altar, and passed it down the person of the candidate from head to foot, or else made the gesture with his hands of drawing the blessing from the stalk of corn and passing it on to the candidate by the gesture. For his service in this function, the priest is given some article of value in fee, perhaps a horse or some other valuable thing.

After this interval for the bringing of gifts to Mother Corn, and for the conferring of names the regular ritual of the ceremony of Mother Corn was carried on again by one of the assistant priests singing chants which recited the story of Mother Corn appearing to the woman in visions in ancient time, and of the revelations and teaching and the divine gift of seed corn which were vouchsafed to the woman.

The next part in the ritual was dramatic dancing by men and women representing the division of labor of the two sexes in providing a living. The symbolic implements of the respective labors of men and of women were the bow and arrow for men, and the hoe for women. With the bow and arrow, the man killed the animals necessary for food and other uses, and he defended his home and his tribe from enemies. The hoe was symbolic of the woman's part in maintaining a settled home, cultivating a garden and providing vegetable food for her family. In making ready for this part of the program, the three bone hoes and the three bows and arrows were paired and placed thus, a bow and a hoe at the southeast lodge post, at the southwest, and at the northwest. At the northeast post was placed an ear of Mother Corn and the object before mentioned as a mace or sword made from "Mother-wood."

The women of certain families in the tribe have the hereditary right to sit at these ceremonies next to one or other of the four lodge posts, and to take leading parts in the ceremonies. Thus, one group has the hereditary right to sit just back of the northeast post, in the quarter dedicated to Mother Corn.

During the dancing men and women paired in turn carried these relic objects and danced in time with the singing and represented their respective uses, the woman on the right with the bone hoe rhythmically made the motions of hoeing, the man on the left likewise went through motions of archery. A fourth woman took up and carried in the dance the ear of corn from the northeast quarter, and a fourth man carried the "Mother-wood" sword from the same quarter. Thus, the four couples danced in the circle about the fireplace, each woman on the right and the man on the left of the couple. From time to time as the dance went on different individuals, women and men, came forward and took these objects from the first dancers, women taking the hoes or the ear of corn, and men taking the bows and arrows and the "Mother-wood" sword. So these went on with the dance while those who relinquished the objects retired and sat down.

Four periods of this dancing alternated with the rest periods. During the periods of dancing, a man might come forward and crouch down as though weeding a garden, facetiously going through motions as though pulling out weeds with his hands and gathering and casting them in heaps. During the third dancing period, a wag came in blacked and made up to burlesque a Negro, ridiculously dressed, and took

part in the dance for the public amusement.

After this dancing, a man was sent out to bring in the bowl of consecrated mush. The man who is sent must be one who has seen active war service and has done exploits. The man sent goes out hurriedly, rushing to the house or tent where the bowl of mush is waiting his coming. At this time the singers sing of the warrior going to fetch the bowl of mush. The singing recounts four acts of his going out after the mush: first, his sitting in the holy lodge; second, his rising to go; third, his standing before the start; fourth, his going forward. Then when he is about to enter bearing the bowl of mush they sing of four acts of his return; first, his standing outside at the door of the holy lodge; second, his entrance into the lodge; third, his passage round the fireplace; fourth, his coming with the bowl of mush before the altar.

When he has come to this position the singing ceases, and the feast-giver, who, of course officiates as pipe-tender, brings to him a lighted pipe. The warrior who brought in the bowl of mush sets it down before the altar, takes from the pipe-tender the pipe and with it makes smoke offerings upon the four quarters of the bowl of mush in the order of the four lodge posts or the four quarters of the universe. Then he offers the mouthpiece of the pipe in turn in the pipe-tender, then to the priest and his assistant, who draw smoke from it and then it is returned to the pipe-tender, who cleans and puts it away.

The priest and his assistants now stepped forward from where they sat at the rear of the Sacred Bundle on the altar, took the mussel shell and divided the mush contained in the bowl into four parts, each of the four assistants, representing one of the Four Quarters, making one cut with the shell.

Now four old men, who had their time performed war exploits, were chosen, three to take up the three sacred relic bows of the Sacred Bundle, and one to take up the sacred relic "Mother-wood" sword. Each of the three warriors with the bows was also given a skin of a species of small hawk, relics from the Sacred Bundle, to carry. These four warriors then, carrying these relics, marched round the fireplace, recounting personal war exploits from their experiences, while the priest and his assistants at the altar sang a war song, keeping time by shaking the gourd rattles. All were speaking at once, each intent only on his own part, so that it created a condition of seeming confusion.

When this singing and speaking was done, the four warriors went to the bowl of mush and blessed

from it the weapons, which they carried. Then they marched again around the fireplace as before, while the priests sang a song of exhortation to all young men to be ever loyal to their people and not slack in performance of their military duty.

Then the four warriors suddenly made a charge upon the bowl of mush as upon an enemy, and each seized a portion of the mush in his hands and hastened with it, each to one of the four quarters of the lodge and there shared it among the people, who divided it among themselves and ate it at once.

Then the women of the four groups sitting next to the four posts of the lodge rose and came forward and stood in a half circle in the open space before the altar and danced there in rejoicing over the victory Mother Corn had given over the enemy. During this dance, the leading woman of the four groups, representing the woman to whom Mother Corn showed favor in the ancient time by revelations and the gift of corn, carried in her hand the sacred relic ear of corn out of the Sacred Bundle.

While the women thus danced before the altar the four warriors, moving about in the space on the north side of the fireplace, continued telling their war exploits.

The priest and his four assistants stood while singing for this dance, each holding in his right hand one of the five "Mother-gourd" rattles with which he kept time for the singing and dancing, while he supported himself with his left hand holding one of the five peeled willow staffs which have been mentioned before as having been placed upright against the wall at the rear of the altar and held in place there by the pole which was suspended horizontally.

This singing and dancing was a prayer for the crops, not only the cultivated crops of their fields, corn, beans, sunflowers, and squashes, but also for the crops of uncultivated plants, as wild grapes, chokecherries, buffalo berries, saskatoons, pembinas, and other wild fruits, and for the ground beans, tipsin, and all other wild plants which afford useful food products. For all these they prayed for favorable weather, for gentle rains, and that storms of destructive winds and hail might be averted. These songs also included prayers for their children, that they might grow in stature and bodily strength and skill and ability, and also for their children's acquirement of knowledge and their growth in wisdom and strength of character.

When this dancing and singing was finished the priest took up the bowl of consecrated mush and sang over it and gave [it] to his assistants to distribute to the people, who received and ate it joyfully. The burden of the singing was an exhortation to the people to give due praise and thanks to Mother Corn for all the blessings which they enjoy, for all victories over difficulties, for escape from dangers, for good crops, for health and strength and prosperity, for peace and happiness and joy and every good thing.

Next, an old woman rose and discoursed on the joy and encouragement and access of strength, which she and other old people feel because of what *Pahok* has done for them in making it possible for them to have the celebration of the mysteries of Mother Corn. So she thanked him on her own account and on behalf of the old people.

When she had finished speaking the man who was proxy for *Pahok*, the giver of the feast, in his function as pipe-tender, took up the great relic pipe from its rest before the altar and carried it round the fireplace and brought it to one of the assistants of the priest before the altar, who then and there burned a bit of sweetgrass and incensed in the smoke of it the great relic pipe. Then he held aloft a bit of Arikara tobacco (*Nicotiana quadrivalvis*) and offered it to the Powers toward the northeast, the southwest, the northwest, and the southeast. After he had offered the tobacco in this order, he filled the pipe with it, and then lighted the pipe with the relic pipe lighting stick out of the Sacred Bundle, which the pipe-tender had lighted at the fireplace.

When he had lighted the pipe, he made smoke offerings first to the bundle of thirty-four small sticks which are used to lay out the diagram for reciting the account of the beginning and orderly progress and improvement of all things in the world, which we have called the "Arikara Book of Genesis." After offering smoke to this bundle of sticks, he made smoke offering[s] to the Powers of the Four Quarters. Having made these ritualistic smoke offerings he passed the pipe along to the people on the north side of the lodge, from east to west, so that all might smoke in communion, then standing between the fireplace and the altar he reversed the pipe, taking the bowl now in his right hand and the stem in his left he passed along the south side of the lodge and allowed the people on that side to draw smoke and blessing from the pipe. When this was done he went before the altar and there emptied out the ashes from the pipe; then he brought

it back to the pipe-tender, who carried it up and laid it down on its rest before the altar.

Then, one of the assistant priests gave a discourse which was a review of the teachings brought down from the ancients as to the origin of these ceremonies by revelation from Mother Corn when she appeared in human form and gave to the Sanish the divine gift of corn together with instructions on the cultivation of the corn, and the rituals connected with it.

(*Sanish* is the name by which the Arikara call themselves. Arikara is our name for them, but is a foreign word to them.)

This discourse concluded the public ceremonies and the people were dismissed and went out from the holy lodge to their dwellings or wherever they might wish to go.

The four women, leaders of the four groups of women stationed during the ceremonies at the four lodge posts, remained at their stations. The eleven men officiating in the ritual, that is to say, the priest and his four assistants, the feast-giver (who officiates as pipe-tender), his assistant, the fire-tender, and the four announcers also remained.

The pipe-tender now returned the common pipes to their several owners. Then the priest took a piece of calico from the stack of gifts to Mother Corn before the altar. Taking this calico and the stalk of corn, which had participated, in its place before the altar in all the ceremonies, he stepped with them to the open space between the altar and the fireplace, the Holy Place as it is called. There he dressed the stalk of Mother Corn in the calico in the manner of a woman's gown, leaving the tip of the stalk and the base only exposed.

Having dressed the stalk of corn thus, he returned to the altar and sat there to sing a song of farewell to Mother Corn, while the pipe-tender took his station between the altar and the stalk of corn. Here he stood while the priest sang the song of farewell to Mother Corn. The songs of the ceremony are in the archaic form of the Arikara language, unchanged through the passage of centuries of years in this ancient ritual.

This farewell song is of the journey of Mother Corn down the Holy River (which white people call the Missouri) to the land of the ancients in the south, from which she came originally, and to carry back the

message of the faithfulness of the Arikara to the ancient teachings.

After finishing this farewell song to Mother Corn the priest prayed that Mother Corn might go on her journey down the great river along the way by which our people came long ago to this land where we Arikara now dwell, carrying to the ancients the message of our continued faithfulness to the teachings which have come down from them to us. He prayed that though Mother Corn is leaving us now to go on this long journey, that she will not leave us forever, but that she will return again to bless us, and especially that she will remember our children and come again to bless them forever.

When the song and prayer were finished the pipe-tender reverently lifted the stalk of Mother Corn and carried it out of the holy lodge and down to the river and placed it in the current of the stream, starting it on its journey just as the day was closing.

After this the eleven with the heads of the four groups of women of the four posts of the lodge, partook of the ceremonial feast in the holy lodge. After this, they went home, happy in having taken part once more in celebrating the mysteries of Mother Corn.