

Curing Sick With Song

Indian medicine men of British Columbia consider material remedies good enough for bruises, small cuts, and other minor ailments, but when a patient is really ill they get out their most potent "medicine," which is music. And the sicker the patient, the more singers should be called in to help the doctor and add to his power.

This important role of singing in the treatment of the sick by tribes of western Canada is reported by Miss Frances Densmore, who has just recorded for the U. S. Bureau of Ethnology 120 songs from Indians living in 16 different localities of British Columbia.

Each autumn, hundreds of Indians from all over British Columbia are brought to the hop fields along the Fraser River valley to work at gathering the hop harvest. Miss Densmore took advantage of this unusual gathering of tribes to bring her phonograph in order to preserve and compare their songs. This enabled her to interview the singers from among over 1,000 Indians, representing a number of tribes.

"British Columbia is so very large and diversified," she stated on returning to her home here, "that I secured songs about the whale, seal, and shark from Indians living by the ocean, and songs about the mountain goat and deer from inland tribes. I have songs from the west coast of Vancouver Island, and others from Indians living along the Fraser, Thompson, Skeena, and Nass Rivers."

Miss Densmore was particularly successful in recording songs from medicine men of the tribes.

"I find that here, as in tribes which I have studied in other regions, music is essential to the treatment of the sick," she said. In these tribes, as in others, the doctor sings of the source of his power and affirms the recovery of the patient. One song, for example, says, 'You will be cured, the whale is going to help me cure you'."

The ethnologist spent the early part of the summer at Neah Bay, where she continued her work of recording songs of the Makah Indians, famous whale hunters of the northwest. She also visited Cape Flattery to record songs of the Quileute, said to be the most successful hunters of the hair seal.

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The ostrich is the largest bird in existence.

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Mirages of the Mind

Long before the discovery of the New World, it was believed that new lands in the far West might be seen from the shores of the Canaries and the Azores. These illusive images were owing not to any extraordinary refraction of the rays of light, but produced by an eager longing for the distant and the unattained. The philosophy of the Greeks, the physical views of the Middle Ages, and even those of a more recent period have been eminently imbued with the charm springing from similar illusive phantoms of the imagination. At the limits of circumscribed knowledge, as from some lofty island shore, the eye endeavors to penetrate to distant regions. The belief in the uncommon and the wonderful lends a definite outline to every manifestation of ideal creation; and the realm of fancy—a fairyland of cosmological, geological and magnetic visions—becomes thus involuntarily blended with the domain of reality.—Humboldt: *Cosmos*.

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BIOLOGY

Man-Eating Lions

Man-eating lions in Uganda, Africa, are becoming so numerous and are causing so many deaths that worried officials believe that the lions are hereditary man-killers.

A report from the chief game warden of Uganda says that the lions about the town of Sanga, which is near Lake Victoria, are very different from ordinary man-killers. Such beasts are usually old and have bad teeth and other defects which prevent them from hunting their natural prey.

The lions about Sanga, however, were strong breeding animals that suddenly found themselves without food through the destruction by the rinderpest of game animals. The desperate lions swooped down on cattle. Somehow they tasted human blood, and the desire for it spread quickly through the race.

"When lions collectively take to man-killing, the taint in their blood is naturally passed on to their offspring," the game warden states, "though the new generations may not necessarily display man-killing tendencies from birth. The taint, however, is lying dormant, awaiting an opportunity to display itself."

The report says that one lion alone has been responsible for 84 deaths, and another had more than 40 human kills to its credit before it was destroyed.

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Hygiene Is World Force

Hygiene is one of the most potent powers to promote world peace, Dr. Andrew Balfour, director of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine declared in dedicating the new building of the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health on October 23. The word "Health," he pointed out, had proved a talisman that had unlocked many foreign doors to the International Health Board of the Rockefeller Foundation in their efforts to eradicate yellow fever and hookworm.

Hygiene is a world force comparable with the pursuit of wealth and the quest for knowledge, stated Dr. Balfour. The epidemiology service of the Health Section of the League of Nations that keeps a watchful eye by wireless on the plague spots of the world, the world wide consideration of quarantine measures, the tremendous sanitary feats accomplished by Great Britain in her over-seas possessions, the similar labors of the Dutch in the East Indies and France in her colonies, were illustrative high lights cited by the eminent British medical leader.

He stressed, as well, the influence of religion on hygiene saying that probably one reason it had done so much for the world was because it was in itself a form of religion. He suggested that hygienic measures would probably never make much progress among the vast populations of India until they came as a part of a new revelation.

"When another fifty years have passed," declared Dr. Balfour, "there can be no doubt that the school which you are opening today and dedicating to Hygeia will also possess a record of which it can be proud, which will redound to the credit of those who guided its early destinies and, what is far better, will demonstrate conclusively the power of modern scientific hygiene in the prevention of sickness and death and in the alleviation of many of the sorrows of mankind."

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Tokio school children are taught to operate automatic telephones by portable systems installed in the public schools.

There is a lake in Alaska where it is possible to get a bath at any desired temperature, merely by swimming about a few strokes.

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