

NOTES ON THE SOUTHERN MAIDU

BY

PAUL-LOUIS FAYE

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The following notes were obtained at Berkeley in November, 1919, from William Joseph, a mixed-blood Maidu visiting the University.

The Northern Maidu have been described in some detail by Dixon,<sup>1</sup> but there is little on record about the Southern Maidu beyond Powers' impressionistic chapters on the Nishinam.<sup>2</sup> Joseph's mother was from Amador county in the vicinity of Plymouth and Forest Home, and his statements may therefore be taken as referring specially to the most southerly of the Maidu in the lower foothill zone. He himself has spent most of his life in other districts, chiefly in association with whites, Miwok Indians, and emigrated Maidu.

### BIRTH CUSTOMS

The woman was helped in her throes by pressure on the side. A rope, on which she could pull to ease herself, was also provided. Women "pressed" her and the same service was rendered to her by young men, "boys of good heart," who walked behind her (as I understood it), clasping their arms in front.

The cradle was never made before the child was born. Many children were born dead. The birth of twins was an infrequent occurrence.

Certain precautions were to be observed by the mother for a few days after childbirth. She must be careful not to let any cold air strike her; she must not eat salt or meat; no cold water should touch her. She was to sleep seated for about sixteen days.

If two children were nursed by the same mother, each had his separate breast. When the navel string was cut it was left about two inches long; the father or the mother spat upon the stub. New-born children were never suckled at once, but on about the second day after birth. Then the people would hold a big feast to which all the family and friends of the family were invited. At the feast only one name, which was always the name of an old relative, was given

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<sup>1</sup> Bull. Am. Mus. Natural History, xvii, 119-346, 1906.

<sup>2</sup> Contributions to N. A. Ethnology, iii, ch. 31-32, pp. 313-345, 1877.

to the child. If all the names of dead relatives of the newborn child had been previously exhausted, then an intimate friend of the family might permit the use of his family record.

Mothers allowed their children to nurse till they were four or five years old. They wean them now when two or three years old. After weaning, the child was fed acorn soup and then meat.

#### MARRIAGE CUSTOMS

In the olden days the parents did the choosing. The boy's father gave away shell-money or other valuables such as blankets. The girl's parents reciprocated in baskets or other property. It was customary, however, for the girl's father to receive more than the boy's father. This exchange of gifts continued for about six months. At the end of six months the boy visited the girl's home. The parents of the boy told the parents of the girl to make down the bed, after which the bride and bridegroom retired. This sufficed for the marriage ceremony.

A big feast, called *nimpiel*, lasting from five to six days, was then held. Immediately after the feast the husband took up his residence with his wife's parents for a period lasting a year or more. The son-in-law was expected to hunt for the family. After a year had passed, he might take his wife away to another home.

When choosing a husband for their daughter, the parents would consider smartness in the young man a more desirable quality than physical beauty. A man who had the reputation of being mukuk, lazy, stood little chance of getting a good wife.

Frequently a girl, before she was nubile, was given to a man, not necessarily a young man, who would take care of her and "spend property" on her. Then he would marry her; nobody else was eligible.

The proper age for a girl to marry was about fourteen or fifteen years old. The same age generally obtained in the case of boys. Old maids were scarce. The informant knows of one woman, about thirty years old, who has failed to marry. She is not bad-looking and cannot be reproached, in fact, in any respect. He attributes her remaining a spinster to a love spite.

When a man in a war party captured a woman he might make her his wife. He might also give her to a friend to become his wife. She was respected the same as a Maidu woman, and after she learned to speak Maidu became one of them.

It took from about six months to a year to woo a girl. If a man was not accepted within this time he would drop his suit. A girl who refused to marry a man after having "led him on" might expect to die by magic. See "Magic."

When a man wanted to marry a widow he asked her directly, but a young man ascertained whether or not a girl was willing to marry him through her parents.

In case of unfaithfulness on the part of the wife, if there were children the husband went away leaving all the property to her that she might continue to provide for them. In olden times it was the custom to kill both the woman and her lover. They always killed the woman first because, they said, if she had not made advances the man would not have bothered her.

#### DEATH CUSTOMS

Cremation was the mode of burial. A pyre was built with a deposit of pitch in the center. Any kind of wood would do. A long pole was used "to scrape off the flesh."

In the old days all the property belonging to the deceased, "except his wife and children," was burned with him. The relatives of the dead man danced around his wife and sang a special song while the burning went on. All the people present took part in the singing and cried. A sort of obituary extolling the deeds performed by the deceased was made.

The body must be held until all the friends of the deceased had been notified and had seen his remains. Should a man fail to receive notice, he would be haunted by the spirit of his departed friend, but the spirit might be pacified if, though notified, for some reason or other he failed to come.

When the singing was over, wormwood (?) and water were used to quench the fire. They would let it lie through the night, then come in the morning to remove the ashes. The task of scooping out the ashes devolved upon a man who was not one of the deceased's relatives. That man was not to eat salt or meat for four days after having handled the ashes. He had to put them in a basket which was buried in earth perhaps three feet deep. A burial basket had to be shaped like a jug, though it does not appear from the informant's statement that the shape was exclusively characteristic of burial baskets. The widow used to bedaub herself, hair and face, with a mixture of pitch and acorn black. She would not rub it off for six months.

Sometimes a man would blacken his face when his wife died, but not often.

The custom today is for women to cut their hair as a sign of grief. All the relatives of the woman must do so, too.

When a woman died with a child at her breast, the people would break the child's neck and put him with his mother in the grave.

The widow had to wait from six months to one year before she could marry again. It might be that if a child was born to her within a year after her husband's demise she did not have to wait the full term.

The name of a dead person was not to be pronounced before relatives or they would show fight. Later the taboo was partially removed—the event, at least, could be mentioned. The deceased might be spoken of though his real name would be withheld.

#### DRESS

Woven rabbit-skin blankets were worn. Nets were used to trap the rabbits, and only those who trapped rabbits had blankets. It has not been ascertained whether the limitation implied by this statement was of an economic or conventional character. The latter would have excluded rabbit-skin blankets from among the articles of trade.

#### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Four musical instruments were described. Only three of these truly deserve this appellation as the fourth instrument given in our list had no other rhythmic possibilities than a rattling noise such as might help dancers in keeping time.

1. Lulok, flute (?), played on the side of the mouth.
2. A flute provided with four holes and made of elder wood. "They imitate a song with it."
3. Musical bow. This instrument was played with the mouth. "It had a key on the end."<sup>3</sup> It was played only by the medicine men.
4. Wadada', split stick. This instrument was made of elder wood and used as a clapper.

<sup>3</sup> This is the recent form due to Spanish influence. Compare the Yokuts musical bows shown in Powers, *op. cit.*, p. 354, fig. 33. The old instrument was no doubt a fixedly strung bow.

## CALENDAR

The Maidu divided the year in two parts, summer and winter. They counted months only in winter, using fire-sticks of a standard size, about half a span. They knew how much of the stick could be burned in one lunar month. When a stick was burned to a certain length they would lay it aside and use another one for a poker. Thus when the moon was not shining they would still know how much time had elapsed since the new moon or in what month they were. The old men took care of the sticks, and of course had endless discussion over them, for the sticks of one man did not always tally with those of his neighbor.

When the acorns dropped off, they knew that it was time to count the first month.

The relation between months and lunar periods is obvious, for the same word was used for both, pomboq.

The first month was called *tamasim pomboq*. Tamas means winter.

*Nempomboq* (*big month*) came next.

*Manaim'kano* (*small month*).

*Noto'ukimpomboq*.

*K'alala'mpomboq*.

*Yomenimpomboq*.

The meaning of the last month's name was rendered by the informant "the blossoming of flowers." *Yə* is the name for spring.<sup>4</sup>

## HUNTING

Winter was the time for hunting by stalking and setting snares, summer for the gathering of seeds.

In summer time the Maidu used to lay nets over the water holes when all the country was dry. Thus they would catch birds and small animals when these would come for water. Their nets were made of rope of twisted grapevine.

In summer also they would snare quails, using to that end sliding loops made of women's hair. Little hedges about a foot high were built across the country with openings provided in certain places where the quail rushing through would hang themselves by the neck.

Another form of summer hunting was catching grasshoppers. Several men would enter a plot of land such as a meadow. They

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Dixon, *op. cit.*, pp. 217-218. The northeastern Maidu also possessed only a part-year or winter moon count.

would dig a funnel-shaped hole and stake it by a twig of some nearby tree, each man selecting a different tree. The technique of the game was to drive the grasshoppers into the hole where they would be bagged.

Deer were hunted by means of a fire built in a circle so that they would be caught in an ever narrowing corral. The men kept close behind the fire as it ate its way inward and shot the deer when they were finally marooned in an area so small that they had no opportunity to flee.

This practice obtained in summer. The catch was divided between all the members of the party. Even when a man killed a deer alone anyone who happened to be around at the slaying expected to be handed a piece.

When the people went out hunting for rabbit they selected one of their number as head hunter. He was responsible for the conduct of operations and they obeyed him. They also took one with them who acted as a luck-bringer. Additional information as to the character of the luck-bringer is lacking. To urinate while hunting would bring ill luck.

The head hunter and the other hunters planned the hunt. It was necessary for them to speak in a whisper lest the rabbits hear them. When the first rabbit was killed the head hunter picked it up, and, pressing it tenderly against his chest, petted it and spoke soft words to it. All the hunters sighed while he was going through this performance.

No food should be carried on a hunting expedition. The meat, however little was caught, was divided equally among all the hunters. In case of a large catch some of the meat was saved and preserved for "big times."

#### AGRICULTURE

Tobacco, *pāñ*, is the only plant that the Maidu used to sow. For it, they cleared, but did not hoe the ground.

It was a general practice of these Indians to clear the forests of undergrowth by setting fire to it. They seem to have been able to keep the fire under control. They claim that it prepared the ground to receive seeds. Seeds, however, were never sown by man's hand.

## PROPERTY

Acorn trees might be marked and thus become individual property. When marked, they were not to be touched by any save the marker. What sort of mark was used it was impossible to ascertain. It seems to have been something like a blaze and not to have carried any indication as to the personal identity of the individual who thereby claimed the tree. A tree even when marked had to be closely watched.

It was not well to mark a tree before the acorns were ripe: only full trees might be claimed in ownership. But ownership does not seem to have extended from one season to another. It was purely a harvesting measure; the harvest over, the tree again became "wild."

## LAND OWNERSHIP

Land belonged to the family or "camp," which seems to have been the usual unit. The camp as such owned a certain gathering area and a hunting ground. There was no division of the land between individual members of the camp.

When a man, head of any family, had a piece of land that had failed to yield produce, some other man would give him some of his own land to live on for the season. All that he might claim was the seeds of the land. He might gather enough to support himself and his family through the winter. If what he could gather was not enough, his neighbor would help him out by donations.

## LAW

A murderer had to reckon with the relatives of his victim who would seek revenge on his person. Only near relatives were to be feared. In case no male relative was left, a sister would pay another man to avenge her brother's death. If she had no property whatsoever, she would become the wife of the avenger.

Theft, also, was punished by death. They would track the suspected man by his footprints or compare some he had made with those left by the thief, and if the footprints matched, execution took place forthwith. What kind of death was dealt has not been ascertained: presumably by clubbing.

## CHIEFTAINSHIP

Chiefs are spoken of by the informant as "captains," which is obviously the translation into English of the word as they borrowed in from the Spaniards, *capitan*. Captaincy was hereditary. Should the family become extinct, a nephew was selected. It did not matter whether he was the son of a sister or of a brother, someone had to be selected.

The selection of the captain devolved upon the old men of the tribe, and they usually selected a young man. After his selection a big feast was held to which other companies, i.e. families or camps, were invited. The new captain received a sack of acorns from each visiting company. The captain's family returned the courtesy in meat. The acorns thus offered to the captain were already hulled so that they could be used for the feast. The feast was given in spring, which seems to have been deemed the favorable time for a captain's appointment. In the fall the captains received another gift of acorns from the same families; the acorns this time were not hulled, and to hull them was the task of the people of his company. These acorns, however, were stored for future use at a certain big feast to be held when the captain saw fit, to which the families that had made a gift of acorns were invited.

From these same families the captain and his people received invitations. Before the visiting company was allowed to reach the camp of the inviting company, the captain and the other members of his party were carried over the ground by their hosts for a distance of about 300 yards. Stout fellows, added the informant, were selected. Each guest thus carried had to make a gift of beads to the man on whose shoulder he or she had ridden.

A feast ensued. In the morning water was heated in a basket by means of hot stones, and the captain's face was washed "so that he could see better." The faces of other members of his company were also washed by men from among the hosts. Old people generally attended to the washing and the captain had to pay them liberally for their offices. Old women would then come and coax the captain to give them huge sums of money, calling him handsome young man and flattering him; he made them, however, but a trifling gift.

Such a custom was a drain on the captain's resources, but the other members of his company helped him out, and soon his resources were replenished.

The captain had a partner, or deputy, a man whose function it was to speak in public. While still young or newly elected, he remained for four or five years in touch with an advisory body of three or four old men. Finally they pronounced him a man of sound judgment and he acted on his own responsibility. Failing a partner or deputy, it fell upon a captain to train his son.

#### INTERTRIBAL RELATIONS

Intertribal relations were difficult. The stranger was looked upon as a natural enemy and scant opportunity was he given to prove himself other. A man might occasionally have a stranger in his care, but the fact had to be kept secret. The stranger must not be seen abroad during his sojourn, and had to travel nights to return home.

A man might marry into another tribe, but he had to speak the language well before any recognition was vouchsafed him on the part of other men of the tribe. Even then he might still encounter ill feelings toward him, but as soon as he had children his position became better.

#### WARFARE

As a declaration of hostilities a certain number of arrows were sent by the attacking party to the people against whom their feelings had risen. The usual practice was to send three or four arrows, indicating thereby that in so many days they would attack. A brave man was selected to take the arrows to the enemy camp.

Then the two peoples would meet in some favorable spot, like an open valley or some cleared ground opening into timber. The battle did not begin immediately. The chiefs of both peoples met at some point of vantage from which they could survey the scene of action and entered into a parley. Meantime the people on either side began to dance. A line was drawn between the two camps; from either camp arrows were shot and the camp whose arrow hit the closest to the line had to put up the first man. That man would come out and face the enemy, who took a volley at him. If he escaped unhurt the other camp then had to put up a man. This continued till one of such protagonists was hit. Then his company would break away and flee. The company whose shot had thus proved ominous went after them with much hallooing, clubbing right and left, making havoc. The chiefs, too, had to abandon their position and run for life. No mercy was shown to the men. Infants were dashed to the ground.

Women and young children were spared and taken back home. The camp of the fleeing party was plundered.

The informant was asked what they would have done, had the match been a draw, no man being hit on either side. He said that in such a case the chiefs would have dispersed the people.

The Maidu did not have slaves. A woman prisoner of war became a wife. Children taken in warfare were divided among the people. A child entering the tribe that way became a Maidu of the same status as the rest. As soon as he could speak Maidu, no difference in treatment was shown him.

#### SOCIAL CUSTOMS

Whenever a feast was given, some family would take it upon themselves to provide for the occasion. Other families were invited several days in advance. A string was left with them with just as many knots as days were to elapse before the feast would be held. Every morning a knot was untied, so that the guests could make arrangements to arrive betimes. A "big time" never lasted less than four days and sometimes extended over a fortnight, and was always associated with a dance. A dance must last four nights or not be held at all.

The families invited camped out and entered into communication with their hosts officially through their spokesman. He made known to the head of the inviting party how many people he had brought by leaving with him a stick of a certain length. According to the length of the stick, by a rough estimate, the food was apportioned. There were three lengths of sticks, the medium size being the most common.

It was the custom of old men to make long speeches while smoking their straight pipes. Each man had his pipe. When called upon he would fill it and blow it twice, no more, and inhale with a great show of satisfaction. Then he would wipe off the stem with his hand and pass it to his neighbor who went through the same performance, and so on, till the pipe had gone the whole round of the smokers. The direction in which the pipe circulated was not ascertained. The smoker always looked upward while the pipe was blown. Such a smoking party was held before dances. The old men then found themselves all of "good language" and gave advice to the young men.

## EDUCATION

Children were mostly under the supervision of the grandparents, who used to tell them stories and impart to them moral teachings.

## BERDACHES

The name for berdaches was ošā'pu. Asked how there could be such characters, the informant said that they just grew that way, being half-man and half-woman in their make-up; the vocation was not enforced upon them. They worked but little, staying home and cooking. One of them is still to be found. He lives with a man. As a rule such individuals were not noted for their brightness; they were fairly well treated by men; no contempt was shown them.

## SWEAT-HOUSE

The "sweat-house" or dance house was built in a round shape and supported by three main posts. The floor was excavated to a depth of several feet.

While building it the men drank acorn soup, held formal talks, and observed an appointed rite as each post was set in the ground and also when setting up the roof ladder. This was to "ward off evil." The roof was covered with brush and earth. One man was usually assigned the wardenship of the sweat-house, an office today that belongs to the chief.

The drum was kept in the rear part of the sweat-house facing the door. It was made of a log slab hollowed out, the end covered with deer-skin. Sound was produced by kicking it with the foot.

More than three posts might be used in the building of a sweat-house, sometimes four and sometimes five. When three, they were disposed in a row; when four in a square; when five in a quincunx; four in a square and the "main post" in the middle. The number of the posts and their positions might vary, but the position of the door and of the drum never did.

This large structure must be distinguished from the true sweat-house in which steam was produced, as described below under "Medicine and Disease."

## CEREMONIALISM

The names of the following dances were recorded: lomuse'mpayo'q or "war-dance" in current local parlance, lolè, tūra, hiwi, k'am'in.

All dances were held around a fire. The duration of each was four days. In the tura and the hiwi there is a chorus of about eight or ten men. In these last two and in the lolo a drum was used. The men in the chorus hum instead of singing, keeping time with the drum. No drum is used in the "war-dance." For beating time, the Maidu also used rattle-like implements made of sticks of elderwood, which made a rattling sound.

## LOMUSEMPAYO'Q

This dance was performed when two tribes or companies had a "feud" and agreed to settle it. It was also performed when an old doctor would feel angry or merely indisposed, or when a new doctor was to be initiated.

The informant does not state positively that the companies had warlike feuds, but, from what he says, the custom seems to have been prevalent for two companies to match each other in order to find which one had the strongest medicine. Sometimes the match was between two "tribes."

The contest was conducted like a feast, which makes it hard to believe that it could have been a matter of ordinary procedure between "tribes." One company assumed the inviting rôle and bore all the expense of the feast. During the first day the guest companies would begin to pour in at the appointed place and pitch camp. Each company danced and made medicine during the night.

About mid-morning one of the guest companies would come out in a body and meet its hosts on some selected appropriate dancing ground.

As they came in sight of each other, the doctors of each company began to shoot at one another. This was a trial of power between the doctors. They kept on shooting till they got very close. Each company in turn stood the test. The doctor shot at or aimed at offered himself as a target and when hit would fall and gasp. Then he would blow the "bullet"<sup>5</sup> out of his mouth, lay it on a rock near by, and

<sup>5</sup> This word may be the informant's equivalent for "arrowhead" of his forefathers.

get up and dance. The bullet was a straw charged with medicine. Not only did the doctors try to shoot each other down by means of their medicine, but they used to display the strength of it by cleaving rocks. When the trial was over, all the doctors would mingle and dance together.

The bullets were made as follows: A hole was dug in the ground about a foot deep and "medicine" put in; burning coals were added. Straw was piled in, then an oak-ball held at the end of a stick was turned over the flames. It seems that all the straw was not reduced to embers, but rose with the flame. Some escaped and flew away on the wind; some stuck on the oak-ball. These latter straws were taken off the ball and used for shooting. They were sent out with the name of the person whose death was intended. The test of being a doctor was that he could stand the shooting while it would hurt a layman.

The same hole serving for the making of the magic bullets was also used in making a new doctor. Generally several men were initiated at the same time. They were told to lie on the ground, with their faces to the hole, for about half an hour. They would become drowsy. Then the older doctors put them on their feet, supporting them, and shook them. An old doctor, while standing with the body of the neophyte laid against his, chest to chest, would cause him to extend his arm in a manner that would free his lungs. The informant, while demonstrating the performance, emitted a sigh characteristic of the neophyte when undergoing this treatment. The performance was repeated by the old doctor with the neophyte's back resting against his chest. When this was over, these neophytes were left to lie, apparently senseless, the whole night; they were wakened about two o'clock in the morning and danced from then on till daylight.

Dancing was resumed late in the morning and went on till early afternoon. The neophytes were then allowed to eat a little soup. In the evening a huge fire was built and dancing began again which was kept until the morning. This lasted four nights and days. In the night, dancing stopped before midnight and started again very early in the morning. The schedule ran thus:

11 a.m. to 2 p.m.	dancing
2 p.m. to 5 p.m.	rest
5 p.m. to 11 p.m.	dancing
11 p.m. to 2 a.m.	rest
2 a.m. to 5 a.m.	dancing
5 a.m. to 11 a.m.	rest

The informant adds that they danced shorter hours in daytime.

The dance began in the morning and ended in the morning. On the morning of the last day, at daybreak, the doctors bathed in cold water in some creek nearby. Then they danced for the last time. Following the last dance food was brought to them. For four days they had been forbidden to touch salt and meat, but now they could partake of any kind of food.

The people who had gone to witness the ceremony stayed long after it was over. The occasion was one for much rejoicing. Games were played and races run for eight or ten days.

In this dance no drum was used. While performing it, the doctors wore their feather cloaks, carried bows and arrows, and decorated their bodies with paint. The men of each district had a certain color or combination of colors that served to identify them. The face was painted, then the chest "straight down"; the leg also, from below the knee to the ankle.

The motions of the dance were rather complicated; each dancer raised his foot, then put it down; he stopped to look around, then went over and over again through the same motions.

#### LOLE

In this dance there was a man who acted as choragus or director of the evolutions. Only women took part. When he yelled, all the women would turn their backs to the fire. He would yell again and they would resume their first position facing the fire. They would take a rest and dance again, the performance continuing with alternate periods of rest and dancing till the morning. Only the man yelled. The only element of variety lay in the songs, a different song being used for each period.

The headdress used in this dance consists, in recent years, of a band of yellowhammer feathers laid across the forehead. The hair is worn loose. There is no special attire; everyday clothes are worn. The lole must be danced barefooted. The dancers, however, wear ornaments of shells and beads that vary according to the wealth of the owner and therefore indicate rank.

Any woman may take part in the lole. Usually it is performed in the spring or in midsummer. It lasts four days and no meat or salt may be touched while it is in progress. The singers used clapping sticks of elderwood.

The choragus wore a feather cloak of hawk feathers or the wing feathers of a crow, and on his head a band of twisted grass. He was a head doctor and one who could act as leader in all dances. There must be a leader in all dances. If the man called upon to act as head singer should refuse to come, the people who wanted to hold the dance would kill him.

#### TURA

In this dance, as in the *lole*, a fire in the center was one of the prerequisites. The *tura* was danced by both sexes together, the men in the inside circle, near the fire, the women in the outside circle away from the fire. The men jumped around and exerted themselves strenuously. The women danced more quietly, just swaying their bodies. A chorus of about eight or ten men belonged to the dance. They hummed, keeping time with a drum.

The *tura*, like the *lole*, was danced in a spirit of fun and merriment.

The headdress of the dancers consisted of a feather stuck upright over the head, and of a band, *seki*, passing over the head with "horns" attached to each side. These horns were made of small forked sticks, with two branches and a shell or a feather at the end of each branch. The dancers wore a feather-cloak, called *talik*, which covered their backs and was tied around the waist. Wing feathers of the hawk or the crow entered into its make-up. Tail feathers of the yellowhammer were used on the headband. A black and white ring painted (?) around the leg of the dancer, below the knee, completed his decoration.

Women dancers wore their everyday clothes and a band of beads around the head. They held a rope or band made of duck feathers, which they carried before them in both hands. The dancing motion consisted in moving their heads from side to side, their hands following the same motion. They raised themselves on their toes, then let their heels fall on the ground again without changing place, and keeping their faces to the fire. Each dance lasted about twenty minutes, and each song was "danced" four times. Then they rested, thinking, as they sat, of the next song.

This dance must never be witnessed by a menstruating woman; should one be found in the sweat-house where the dance was held, the head dancer would detail a man in the crowd to see that she was turned out.

The singers carried clapping-sticks in their hands and stood in front of the drum facing the fire. There was only one man kicker of the drum.

No meat, grease, or salt might be eaten by the participants. On the morning after the fourth night they marched singing toward the water to wash themselves. They doffed their dancing apparel and other paraphernalia, one of the men taking charge of these. Should any of the clapping-sticks have been broken in two, they carefully kept the two parts. If the broken sticks happened to be in sufficient quantity, they were disposed of either by burying them in the mud or by throwing them into a running stream.

#### K'AM'IN

This, like the tura, is a pleasure dance and was performed by both men and women together, with only one male singer. Many people always take part in it, men and women always in equal numbers. The men wear bands of yellowhammer feathers on their forehead, and feather cloaks. Their headdresses are provided with horns as in the tura, these horns being topped with a white feather of the wing of a bird.

This dance like all the others is performed around a fire. The men dance close to the fire, the women in a circle behind the men, all facing the fire. All dance silently until the choragus makes a motion pointing up in the air: then all shout and stop suddenly. The choragus uses a whistle made of the bone of a bird. The singers use clapping-sticks. The same song is repeated throughout the dance.

#### SHAMANISM

The Maidu recognized two ways of becoming a shaman or "doctor," as the informant expressed it. Self-initiation was one way: a young man went out into the woods and had dreams. The other way was through initiation by another doctor.

The novice had to observe certain taboos. He must abstain from salt, meat, and grease for one year and during that time eat nothing but acorn soup. Any breach of this rule unfitted him for his vocation. A true doctor, states the informant, never ate salt or meat. He ate "medicine" and nothing else for four days previous to undertaking to cure a sick person. Asked what he meant by medicine, the informant said that it consisted of herbs, but could not describe them

nor give their names. Eating anything on the part of the shaman would interfere with the cure. The sick man's relatives also had to observe the salt and meat taboo for a period of four days.

The boy's father paid for his training. The fee was very high. In former times it used to be paid in shell-money. Today legal tender is used. The ordinary fee is about \$200.

When a man sought this vocation through self-initiation, he had to fast every day till noon. While out in the woods he would look for the thing that would teach him. That thing was a devil of some sort that roamed through the woods. He did not see the thing, only heard it. Then he would know what herbs to cull. The name of that devil was given by the informant as 'us, which he translated as "spirit." A doctor sought dreams but he never told any one about his dreams.

#### CURING BY THE HIWE DANCE

When a man was sick a doctor was called in, and a sweat-house erected for the occasion. Most of the healing ceremony, however, took place outside of the sweat-house. A fire was built away from it; between it and the sweat-house ranged themselves, in a line from the fire to the door, the drummer with his drum, a chorus of singers, and a platoon of dancers.

The dance now given was the same as the hiwe dance. In fact the purpose of the hiwe dance, the informant states, was healing.

The paraphernalia used in the hiwe are about the same as for the tura, consisting of a head-feather stuck upright at the back of the head and a band of feather-work; but there are no horns on the band. The dancers bedaub their faces and arms and the upper part of their bodies with acorn soup. Over this preparation they shake down-feathers which adhere when the sticky liquid dries. The dancers carry long sticks of elderwood in their right hands.

The dancers never move away from the drum and keep their faces to the fire. The singers sit with their backs to the fire.

During the first four dances two women are appointed to burn seeds (siwi). One stands by the post on the right hand coming in, the other by the post on the right hand going out. The seeds are burned to ward off evil. After the fourth dance the sick people are brought in.

The patient is made to lie over the drum, on his stomach, his head to the west. Then the doctor lays hold of his head and turns him

around in a circle four times, the sick man finding himself after the last turn with his head to the south, his feet to the north. The doctor or head dancer again chews some medicine, spits it in his hand, and proceeds to press the patient's body from head to feet, blowing medicine on him all the while. He does this on one side first; then he begins on the other side. This is repeated four times.

At this point the members of the dancing party take the feathers off their heads, each man giving his feather to the doctor, who is busy "pressing" the sick man. The doctor takes the bunch of feathers, and makes a sweeping motion with it over his patient's body. At the same time all the men strike their chests and in a whisper say, "gone to the north."

The feathers are handed back to their owners, who dance again till the healing ceremony is over.

The sick man's relatives have to abstain from eating salt and meat while he is being treated.

Many people may be treated on the same day.

#### MEDICINE AND DISEASE

A genuine doctor, said the informant, treated his patients by sucking the blood out. He also gave medicine by the basketful and always hot. That medicine was a decoction of native herbs. The doctor had to take his medicine in the presence of the patient to ward off the suspicion of poison. The disease came out with the blood. The doctor spat it out in a hole dug in the ground and afterwards covered it.

What the fee for medical services was has not been ascertained. Nothing was charged until the patient got well. In case of death no fee could be charged.

The most common ailments that seem to have afflicted the Maidu and caused them to seek relief in medico-religious treatment were the following: fracture, knife cuts, hemoptysia, headache, rheumatisms, diarrhoea, constipation, gonorrhoea. The informant was not able to make any distinction between syphilis and gonorrhoea. In fact he did not recognize the symptoms of syphilis when described to him. He states that venereal diseases were unknown among the Maidu before the arrival of the whites. The treatment of gonorrhoea consisted in drinking medicine that increased the flow of urine.

Rheumatism, *mēnus*, was treated by steaming in the sweat-house in the evening. The sweat-house consisted of a willow frame over which was stretched a rabbit-skin blanket. Steam was produced by throwing water on hot stones. The patient was made to stay in the sweat-house till he perspired freely. In addition, quartz rock was pounded fine and cooked with medicinal herbs and water in a basket. Hot stones were dropped in the basket; steam rose, and the patient inhaled till he could stand it no longer. Should the treatment have no effect, the patient was made to lie on hot stones and the doctors would massage him, turning him over on all sides. Next morning before daylight he took a plunge in cold water. Doctors always operated between evening and morning, i.e., during the night.

Headaches were cured by the smell of certain aromatic weeds, among them a root, the size of a man's wrist, called *kūia*, which the informant could not further describe.

Hemoptysis was said to yield to internal treatment. The patient drank a medicine, the name of which could not be obtained.

For diarrhoea, *pitepe'e*, they took sweet manzanita flour, made of manzanita (*kotō*) berries pounded fine.

A bitter root, the size of a man's wrist, was used in cases of constipation. The name for constipation was *piskatecik*.

Fractures were treated by bandaging. A certain medicine, of the nature of an unguent, called *tupunim wehe*, was also used.

Other ailments were chills, *waku'ō'ō*, fever, *pidep*, paralysis, *lotōpe*. These were treated by steaming in the sweat-house.

#### MAGIC

When a tree had been struck by lightning they believed that a hair was to be found there which nobody but a doctor could find. The doctor kept the hair and later, as there was need, would burn it to cause rain. Only a doctor could safely approach a tree that had been struck by lightning.

When a man had wooed a girl for a certain length of time and she had accepted his advances, so that he had spent money on her, should she afterward refuse to marry him the man was likely to go to a doctor to have her poisoned by magic.