
It is ordinarily in February that they prepare to go to war. Before starting, it should be noted that in each village there are several chiefs of the young men who dispose of thirty, forty, and sometimes of as many as fifty men. That is why, at the time I have spoken of, they invite them to a feast and tell them that the time is approaching to go in search of men; so it is well to pay homage, according to their custom, to their birds so that these may be favorable. They all answer with a loud Ho! and after eating with great appetite they all go to get their mats and spread out their birds on a skin stretched in the middle of the cabin and with the chichicoyas they sing a whole night, saying: stone falcon, or crow, I pray to you that when I pursue the enemy I may go with the same speed in running as you do in flying, in order that I may be admired by my comrades and feared by our enemies. At break of day they bring back their birds. When they wish to go to war, one of them, or the one who is their chief, offers them a feast, usually of dog. After all are placed, they observe a great silence and the host says: "My comrades, you know that I have wept for a long time; I have not laughed since the time that my brother, father, or uncle died. He was your relative as well as mine, since we are all comrades. If my strength and my courage equaled yours, I believe that I would go to avenge a relative as brave and as good as he was, but being as feeble as I am, I cannot do better than address myself to you. It is from your arms, brothers, that I expect vengeance for our brother. The birds that we prayed to some days ago have assured me of victory. Their protection, along with your courage, should induce us to undertake anything." Then he rises and, going up to each one, passes his hands over his head and over his shoulders. Then the assembled guests say: "Ho, ho! It is well. We are ready to die: you have only to speak." They thank him, and then depart at night and go about two leagues from the village to sleep.

maxim with them never to set out by day when they go in small parties, because, they say, if they went by day, they would be discovered before making their attack. Their band does not ordinarily exceed twenty. The youngest, who is always the one who has shared in the fewest ventures, carries the kettle and has charge of the cooking and mends moccasins for all of them, which is no slight task. Accordingly, he hardly ever sleeps at night; but since this is the custom, they always do it amicably. They take the precaution of hiding in two or three places stores of bacon and flour and some small kettles, to serve in case they should be pursued by the enemy, so as not to have to stop to hunt in order to keep alive. They also mark places for joining each other in case they are obliged to go by several different routes, and in such cases those who arrive first
take a little of what they have left, if they need it, and leave their marks, which they never
mistake. They paint a portrait of themselves for this purpose on the nearest tree. Although
several of them- have heads of hair that look just alike,

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the mark of their names identifies them. They all have significant ones; one, the Buck, another
the Buffalo, the Wolf, the Sun, the Earth, the Water, the Woman, the Child, the Girl, or
something formed from these names as, Buckfeet, Bear's Head, Woman's Breast, Buffalo Hump,
the Eclipsed Moon or Sun, and so forth. Thus after painting themselves, as I have related, they
draw a line above the head, at the end of which they draw a buffalo or its hump, a buck or its
feet, the sun or a cloud above it, and so forth. When they approach an enemy, the one who leads
the party sends out two of the most active a league ahead to reconnoiter the places through which
they must pass. If they see smoke or other traces that lead them to believe that the enemy is not
far off, they come to report to the chief, who calls a halt.

I have forgotten to say that the commander carries his mat, into which all his men have put their
birds, along with a good stock of herbs for healing the wounded. As soon as they stop the chief
takes out the birds and, after offering a short prayer to them, sends out three or four of the most
active and brave to

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reconnoiter for the enemy. If by chance they find but a man or two, they attack these without
warning their comrades. If the number is very considerable they return to report, and after
thoroughly examining the place where they are to attack them, they invariably wait until morning
when the day is beginning to break, and they never fail to paint themselves and to give attention
to their footgear, as a precaution in case they should be obliged to flee. Two or three of the
youngest remain with the baggage in the most hidden spot. At a couple of arpents' distance from
the enemy they emit the most astonishing yells in order to frighten him, running at him when he
takes to flight. In this they triumph, for they know that the enemy cannot run as well as they I
speak of the Iroquois. They give the same cry as their birds in running after them. If they are
three in pursuit of one man and are in doubt which of the two will lay hands on him, the first who
can touch him with some missile is the one to whom the prisoner belongs, even if another should
lay hands on him first. They then

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utter several cries to attract the attention of their comrades who are fighting elsewhere, or who
are in pursuit of others, who thus learn what they have done. When they have bound their
prisoners and have reassembled, the leader makes a little harangue in which he exhorts his men
to thank the spirit for having favored them, and to make every effort to get speedily away from
the spot where they are. They march ordinarily for two days and nights without stopping, resting
only at their meals. If their captives are women who cannot march, which happens very often,
they smash their heads or burn them on the spot, which they do only in extreme cases, as the man
who brings a prisoner to the village is more esteemed than the one who kills six men among the
enemy. If unhappily some of themselves have been killed, the leader of the band paints himself
with mud all along the road and weeps frequently as he marches and, on reaching the village, is
obliged to carry presents to the relatives of those that have been killed to pay for their death, and
he is expected soon to go back to avenge the slain. If some one is again killed of those with him,
he has great
difficulty in finding men willing to accompany him a third time, which causes him to be hated by
the kinsfolk of the dead, unless by dint of presents he finds means (to use their language) to
mend their hearts.
To return to their manner of behaving when they return victorious to the village: two men go
ahead, and when they are near enough to make themselves heard, they utter cries for as many
persons as they have killed, and they name these. Many people run out to meet them, and the
first to arrive take everything that the warriors carry, which they appropriate. Those who are
unwilling to part with some arm or other object which they like, take care to hide it the day
before their arrival; but they are taxed with avarice. As I have said, if someone of them has been
killed, the leader of the party carries in his hand some broken bows and arrows, and those who
precede the party utter cries saying: "We are dead!" whereupon the women utter terrible howls
until it is learned who the dead are, and then it is only the relatives who redouble their outcries.

As soon as the news has become known, a man of consideration makes preparations to regale the
warriors, who are invited to enter. When they have arrived in the cabin which has been prepared
for them, oil is immediately brought to them in dishes, with which they lubricate their legs. The
one who gives the feast goes weeping to pass his hands over their heads to make known to them
that some of his relatives have been killed by warriors of the nation from which they bring back
prisoners, and that they would give him pleasure in killing them. During this time the prisoners
are outside the cabin (for it is a maxim with them never to admit slaves into their cabins unless
they have been granted their lives.) These sing their death song, holding in one hand a stick ten
or twelve feet long, filled with feathers from all the kinds of birds that the warriors killed on the
road. This is after having them sing at the doors of the cabins of all those who have most recently
had relatives killed,
The old men and party leaders assemble and decide to whom these slaves shall be given. This settled, they lead one of them opposite the door of the cabin of the one to whom they give him, and bringing along some merchandise, they enter and say that they are delighted that the young men have brought back some men to replace, if they desire it, those whom the fate of war has taken away. For this offer great thanks are returned. A little later these people assemble and decide what they will do with the prisoner who has been given to them, and whether they wish to give him his life, a thing rarely done among the Illinois. When he is a man, they admit him and send for the principal men of the village who have brought them the prisoners. They thank these and give them some merchandise. When they want him put to death, they bring him back to the cabin of the most considerable of those who have offered him, giving the captive to them, with a kettle and a hatchet which they have colored red to represent blood. From there he is taken to others, and according to their decision he dies or lives. When he is condemned to die, it is always by fire. I have never seen any other kind of torment used by this nation.

They plant a little tree in the earth, which they make him clasp; they tie his two wrists, and with torches of straw or firebrands they burn him, sometimes for six hours. When they find his strength far gone, they unfasten him and cut his thumbs off, after which they let him, if he wishes, run after those who are throwing stones at him, or who wish to burn him. They even give him sticks which he holds with great difficulty. If he tries to run after anybody, they push him and he falls on his face, at which they hoot. He sometimes furnishes a whole hour's diversion to these barbarians. Finally he succumbs under the strain of his torments, and sometimes drops down motionless. The rabble run to get firebrands, which they poke into the most sensitive parts of his body; they trail him over hot embers, which brings him back to life, at which they renew their hooting, as if they had performed some fine exploit. When they are tired of their sport, an old rascal cuts his flesh from the top of the nose to the chin and leaves it hanging, which gives him a horrible appearance. In this state they play a thousand tricks on him, and finally stone him or cut open his stomach. Some drink his blood. Women bring their male children still at the breast and place their feet in his body and wash them with his blood. They eat his heart raw. There are men and women that might be called cannibals, and who are called man-eaters because they never fail to eat of all those who are put to death in their villages. When evening has come, everybody, big and little, knocks loudly with big sticks on the cabins and on their scaffolds in order, so they say, to drive away from their village the soul of the one whom they have killed. When they go to war among the Pawnee or Quapaw, who are established on the river of the Missouri, almost all the village marches, and even many women accompany them. Thus they
take along whole villages. When they are ready to leave, several young men go about dancing at the doors of all the cabins, one of whom has a drum on his back. They usually use an earthen pot, which they half fill with water and cover with a buckskin, which they stretch as tight as they can, and they turn the pot upside down from time to time to moisten the skin, which gives it a better sound. A man stands behind and beats it. Everybody dances round them and each one gives them something. When the women see that they are preparing for this dance, they lead away all their dogs to a distance, for any of them that they find they kill and feast on. They always spare the lives of the women and children unless they have lost many of their own people. In that case they sacrifice some to the names of their dead, throwing them suddenly into the fire to consume the bodies of their slain ones. This Missouri River, of which I have just spoken, has many nations along its banks, and there are still more inland. It comes from the west. It is very beautiful and very wide. It empties into the Mississippi eight leagues from the mouth of the Illinois River. Several Indians of the nations that live there who often come to trade among the Illinois, have assured me that it comes from a great lake, which has still another outlet on the other side, which would lead one to believe from their report that it falls into the Western Sea. The Pawnee and Wichita, who live in the territory and the neighborhood of this river, have relations with the Spaniards, from whom they get horses of which they make use sometimes to pursue the buffalo in the hunt. Those which they get from the Spaniards are all differently marked on the buttocks with letters. They call them, so I have heard, Canatis, having no other special name for them in their languages. These two nations have an abundance of turquoises, looking like our little glass beads. They make use of them as ornaments hung from their noses and ears, spinning out the beads to the length of a finger with buffalo sinew, afterwards joining the two ends together, at the bottom of which they hang a turquoise, triangular shaped, of the thickness of about two crowns and not quite as big as a halfranc piece. They call them their pendants and esteem them, according to their beauty, of the value of a slave, who in those regions is worth sometimes a hundred francs. Prisoners from these nations have told us that they traded these turquoises with Europeans, who probably can only be Spaniards. From some leagues above its mouth, the river is very rapid, and the soil is so loose that in spring, when the water is high, it carries off this soil in such great quantity that it renders the Mississippi
turbid for more than 200 leagues. The Indians of whom I have spoken who come to trade among the Illinois are the Osage and Missouri, who not long ago had war with them, and who, aside from their need of hatchets, knives, and awls, and other necessary things, are very glad to keep on the good side of this nation, which is much more warlike than theirs. They never fail every year to come among them and to bring them the calumet, which is the symbol of peace among all the nations of the south.