

menstrual discharges cease, and they are washed up. When a maiden arrives at womanhood, and has made her first out-of-door lodge, the public crier goes through the camp or village, and announces the fact in a loud song.

The Sioux have secret societies, something like freemasonry, but they admit women to membership. They meet in a lodge, which is guarded on the outside from prying curiosity, by one of their members. In this lodge they perform their ceremonies. Any person wishing to join them, makes the application through one of the members, and is then on probation for about a year. If they are bad, they must reform. If, at the end of that period, no objection is made, he is generally admitted; and, I was told, that they have signs by which Indians of that fraternity of different bands know each other. Either after or before their meeting, I do not remember which, they assemble and have a holy dance, which is called by the French, *la danse de la grande medecine*, as the French translate all their spiritual or juggling proceedings into medicine. At this dance, among other ceremonies, after dancing and singing awhile, one of their number takes a garnished sac, usually made from the otter, and runs at the different members, making some noise, and they generally fall down or over, pretending that it is the effect of spirits from the bag, and lay prostrate for a moment or so, and then rise again, and join in the dance. This dance is generally continued till late in the night.

The amusements of the men are shooting at a mark, or playing at the game of ball, called by the French, *le jeu de crosse*. This is usually played in the summer on some large prairie,* with a stick about two and a half or three feet long, with a small hoop on one end, crossed with net-work of thongs of leather, making a sort of sac, in which they frequently catch the ball. How they count, or their boundaries, I have forgotten. The women amuse themselves by playing at what is termed the dish-play, which is

*Prairie La Crosse took its name from this game being frequently played there. J. H. L.