

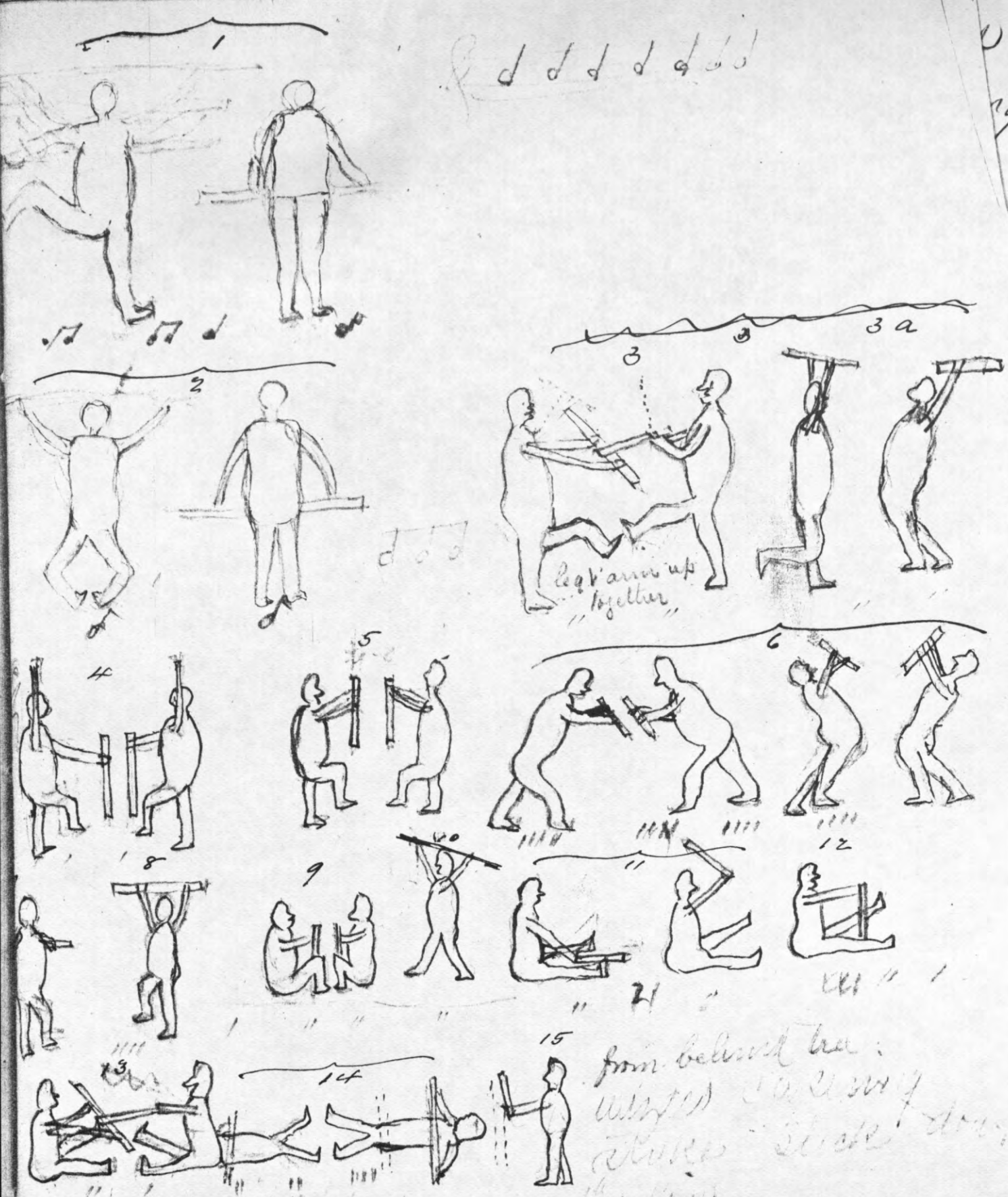
6/6/95

Special Note.

Tēmiah

Description of a Summeor
wizard dance or charm
(incantation) against
the small-pox

Erledig



Women & boys repeat side
 women & boys take holding on ground boys
 with click

Potem in white earth back
 front of trunk of body
 same design in every back
 the skin being clipped
 & rubbed on



(1)

The Lurmeor Wizard dances
a charm or incantation for banishing
small-pox

It so happened that while I was
in the Lurmeor principal camp, a few ~~days~~^{weeks}
ago, a Kersisi man travelling northward, came
in for the night's stay. In the morning he
was unable to proceed on his journey
feeling ill. In a few days he exhibited unmistake-
able symptoms of small pox a disease most
dreaded by all the orang Utan, (and with-
good reason, for it carries them off very
quickly). Great consternation arose in the
camp and the whole of the Lurmeor
were preparing to start out and leave
the unlucky stranger to his fate.

As that would have caused me
considerable trouble and annoyance I
went at once to the head man and the
wizard who were discussing the matter in
the centre of an excited ring of both sexes.
and told him that if he would do as I
wished, I would, by a special white man's
charm (= isolation) banish the small pox
hantus & take care that no one else was
attacked if they would not run away from
the village. After some hesitation all present
agreed that I should have a trial. I knew
no one would voluntarily go into the
big communal house where the sick man
lay, and as I saw an opportunity to
pick up a little information in the shape
of witnessing the Lurmeor charm which
the wizard expressed his intention of performing
I trusted to good luck that no one else if I
took care, would get the disease as I had.

suffered from it long ago. I did not
fear it so after attending to my patients.
requirements I had a council with the
head man & the wizard. I sent all those
who had not been in contact with the
sick man at all, across the river & as separate
from those who had. I sent close to the
patient, burning the ragged dirty parangs some
of the men had at once & promising them
new ones.

I had heard that the Summeor
wizards, in old times had special
"dances" & ceremonies for small pox and
cholera, and I very much wished to see
one of these dances performed so. I
asked the wizard if he recollected how
it was done. He replied that he himself
knew, but doubted if there were enough
of the men who knew also, to make up
a sufficient party, as the ancient rule
enjoined that only the men of the same
totem as the sick man could take part
in the dance. Thus, if an "ant" totem
man was sick, the "ant" men collected
and performed the dance, the "leaf"
and the "star" men being only lookers
on. (if any present.) The sick man at
present was not a Summeor & therefore
by custom no dance should be performed
until one of their own men fell ill.

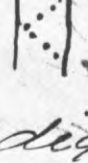
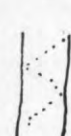
However I pressed the point,
as this was an opportunity I might
not get again and the wizard said
that he would get his comrades
across the river who knew the dance
to teach those who did not, and that
as soon as the moon was propitious
(for the dance is always performed

by moonlight, aided by three large fires on which scented dammar is dropped at intervals.

He obtained sixteen men of the "ant" totem, and in a few days had one he was ready. As there were many more men in the camp I asked if they would not join in but was told that they claimed to be descended from ancestors of either star or leaf totem & therefore could not take part. Though they knew how to do so for all the dancers must have the totem painted in white clay (by the finger as a brush) as large as possible in size on the back & breast and if a man painted himself or his neighbor with a totem mark which did not belong to him rightfully the painted party would break out in sores after into incurable ulcers all over the skin where the totem had appeared. As the dancers must be all of one totem, these extra men were debarred from appearing with their own totem painted on them.

As the sick man was a stranger & not a Summer, the wizard had selected the totem which had most men present in the camp. & this happened to be the "ant." Otherwise had there been a majority of "star" or "leaf" men, he would have prepared them for the dance instead.

Two or three of the "ant" men had refused to join, as the dance was not up at my request. For a man not of their own totem, and they feared harm to the dancers from hantus in consequence.

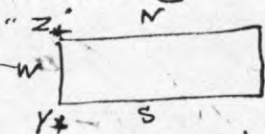
When the appointed night came
I gave all the dancers a dinner
at sun-set. after which, in the
light of dammar torches, of which
a liberal supply had been prepared
for the occasion, they proceeded
to paint each other with the  pattern
by smearing a white pipe clay  of
earth they had obtained by digging
on to the skin with the forefinger
of such size that the "seven" angles
proper to the dotted lines occupied
the whole of the length of back &
"breast" from neck to the back
"shawat" or loin cloth they wore
a bark head band, marked in
charcoal with the totem, repeated
at intervals round the circle of bark
"    " completed the costume
a space had been
previously cleared and swept and
a small "round" * ^{with cone roof} hut, made of slight
sticks about 3 metres high stuck in
a circle in the ground & tied together
with rotan with leaves and twigs
interlaced & tied on so as to hide
the interior had been made for the
wizard's use. He keeping out of sight
until the dance had actually begun
& retiring into the hut after it till
the others had gone away.

Three large fires had been
lit at one side of the cleared space
and boys were told off to keep them
burning brightly. In older time, when

* I noticed this at once as unusual & enquired
why it was that shape. Being told that it
was always so but why no one knew.

the wizards were in classes. a wizard of class N° 2 (previous note) would take charge of the proceedings & one or more of class 7 under his directions would have cleared the place and built the fires and hut. but now, with one man only as wizard, the laity had to help a little in the less important parts.

While the men were painting the wizard, already painted back & breast like the others, but with a quantity of magic leaves & flowers stuck between the painted head-band and his head, in such manner that they stood upright & concealed his hair went into the hut and bringing out his magic bamboo staff - a metre (approx.) long bamboo with the totem pattern cut on it by the hard skin of the bamboo being cut off on the pattern lines, and charcoal being rubbed on the surface thus exposed, so as to show up the totem design in broad black lines and spots - previously placed there, went to the north line of clearing -



one of the laity previously instructed went up to him and took the bamboo staff from him, going with it to corner Z, and placing the end of the bamboo on the ground trailed it from "Z" as far as the clearing had been made at "Y", along the southern line to the Eastern one, turning at the top of that & going to "Z" again, the trailing end of the staff having described a parallelogram. He then returned to the wizard & gave him back the staff.

[after the dance was over I ascertained that in old days, the assistant wizard of N° 7 class

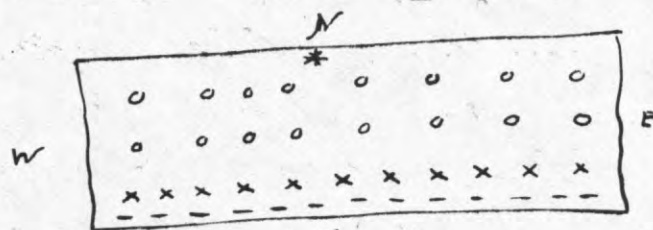
would have done this, and have painted the principal wizard inside the hut, before he shewed himself to the people.]

All the men who were to dance had provided themselves with bamboo marked with the totem in the same manner as the wizard's. One end of the bamboo had been cut off, below the node so as to leave the top joint with an open mouth, the lower joint had its node left on. The object in this was that when the bamboo was thumped vertically on the ground it gave a different tone according to which end struck the ground.

All the women, of the same totem had provided themselves with two bamboos of large diameters & of different lengths. (Soon Song) for the purpose of beating time by thumping the bamboo (held vertically) alternately, right & left hand on the ground, together in unison of time. The longer bamboo of deeper sound, being in each woman's right hand & the smaller in the left hand, held by the middle.

The boys of that totem had a slip of bamboo, split off a joint between the nodes, & a short thin stick. These bamboo slips were each marked with a single line of the totem design in the same manner as the wizard's staff, and the women's "Soon Song". By striking the bamboo slip with the stick in the right hand while the left held the bamboo at one end, a sound was produced which at the same time the women's longer or right hand Soon Song was struck on the ground.

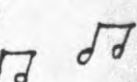
while for the alternate beat of the smaller
 Soon Long, sharper in tone, the boys clipped
 the left hand along the bamboo till it
 grasped about the middle so that the
 blow of the stick as before, made a
 sharper sound on the shortened slip
 all the afternoon the boys & women
 had been trying their implements
 together, cutting & mucking ("turning" in
 fact) and adjusting the tones.
 As soon as the wizard's
 assistant had taken the staff in
 order to trace the lines. The women
 boys and dancers all hurried up
 and stood within the cleared space
 so that the line (a barrier against
 hantus) was described outside them



fire fire fire

Dammer torches were then liberally
 stuck in the ground on the line & lit.
 and all not participating in the ceremony
 gathered round the fires.
 The wizard stood in sketch
 above at * on Northern side. The men, stood
 facing the West at the marks "ooo". The
 women squatted at "xxx" with their "Soon Long's"
 and the boys with their bamboo clips
 squatted behind them at "----"

* As these even stood outside the magic line & were exposed
 without defence to the hantus, while those inside were
 protected, I think, as I queried in a former note, that the
 present idea of the protective function of the line is as
 its first intention, which was merely to define the boundaries
 of the actors in the incantation

The women & boys were the orchestra & kept very good time. The two notes they were able to produce being arranged in various ways as the actions of the dancers varied. The boys keeping in time & tone with them. Sometimes it was the steady equal beat of the alternate tones, (right & left hands of the women rising & falling alternately as if pounding rice. sometimes two beats of the one bamboo in succession & then one of the other. or the beats were arranged in varied time, as  & two or more beats following closely & a longer pause between.

At the change from one form of beat to another, the last thump of the preceding the change was accompanied by ^{the shout of} an "Ha" from the women & boys within the space, and the men gathered round the fires but not from the male dancers.

The movements of the men dancing kept time to the beats of the "orchestra" & the changes were made to suit.

I had not the slightest idea of what the movements would be like or how long the men would remain in one position or action to allow me to sketch them as I hastily noted the sequence of the positions with a pencil on the accompanying sheet of paper. thinking to make a drawing for you at leisure with it to ~~for~~ guide my recollection of the attitudes. But on second thoughts, as I have I send it as it is. The red ink figures indicate the succession of the positions ^{each of} which lasted for some twenty or thirty repetitions before the change to the next.

Explanation of 3 figures of dance

The men & women having all taken their places, the wizard tapped the ground three times with the butt end of his bamboo staff, every one else being still and silent.

Then the women & boys gave seven slow equal beats of the deeper tone and then broke into a steady beat of two strokes close together in time with the one hand & a longer pause between the two quicker beats of the other, while with the first beat the men who had been standing perfectly still, facing the West in two lines one behind the other raised their bamboos (which up to the first beat had been held in the right hand figure of No. 1) with straight extended arms out at the shoulder level. With the second sound of the first pair of beats the arms dropped as before. To rise again with the next, but this time elevating the bamboos to the level of the eyes & returning to position with the following beat. Again up, but this third time elevated as high as the arms could reach, & down with the second of the beat again.  a single emphatic thump

from the orchestra, on the higher note, accompanied by an "Ha" from the lungs of the players & bye-standers. Continued some twenty times, but as there is no rule how long a figure may be continued, the number of repetitions varies according to the fancy of the wizard, who when he considers it has gone on long enough raises his staff, and ^{alternately} at the note ending the movement, drops it with a thump which is the signal for the watching orchestra for the single beat & the shout of "Ha"

No. 2 Equal beats & intervals, right & left hand of orchestra, the men, who were standing

in the erect position they left off in at the close of the prior movement, with the first beat open the knees ^{sideways} & sink down to that extent at the same time throwing up the arms & bamboo above the head as shown and with the second beat back to erect position & lowered arms. 

Movement N^o 3: ~~Proceeded~~

The orchestra gives, after a slight pause, three equal, deliberate beats with the deeper tone.

at the first tap the two lines of men turn sharply round on their heels to face each other.

at the second the line of men closer to the wizard throw up their arms so that the bamboo is outstretched transversely across the body as in sketch ^{the hands widely apart}. At the same time the left leg is thrown forward & raised off the ground. The line of men facing them at this beat also throw forward the right leg in opposition but with some little distance between the pair and at the same time instead of grasping the staff about the middle of its length, alter the grip to the open end (one end like the Turn Souns of the orchestra being open & the other closed) & raise the staff as if to strike a down blow at the man facing

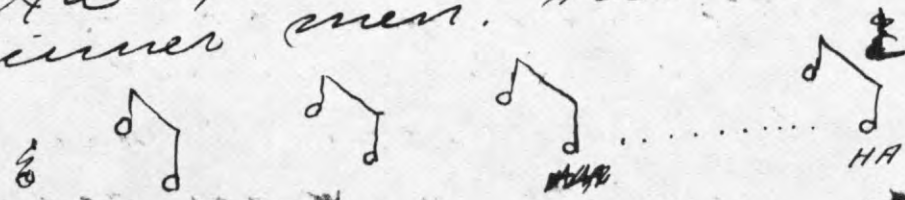
at the third tap from the orchestra the inner men (from the wizard's position) simultaneously bring down their bamboo smartly on their opponent's staff, held out to receive it. The gleam of the fire & torch light on the glistening surface of the bamboo as they fall into
* and bring down the leg to standing position at the same time

position so well timed that the series of sounding blows on the hollow tubes seems as if a single one. has a very pretty effect. and the bystanders critically watch the regularity of the rising & falling bamboos with intense but suppressed excitement.

Should one man be the fraction of a second too early or too late with the rap on his vis-a-vis's staff it is instantly marked by all & the man is derided for it after the ceremony is over & the men discussing it by the fires.

after the three preliminary taps from the orchestra. for position the women start a steady sounding of ^{left & right} ~~right & left~~ hands alternately with equal time* and the dancers with the beat of the higher or left hand note raise their arms and alternate leg and with the deeper or right hand beat lower them. the one line to receive & the opposing to deliver the sounding stroke.

after a while the wizard gives the signal as before & with a loud "Ha" given at the down stroke of the inner men. this movement



Movement 3 A. The orchestra gives three quick taps from left hand bamboos & after a slight pause. a heavy thud with the right hand one and then a pause again.

* You will understand that all this time the boys are accompanying the women beat for beat with their bamboos

At the first sound of this the dancers throw up the arms as high as possible. the inner men bending backward. The outer men stand with legs straight as if at "attention" but as the orchestra after the momentary pause proceeds with the same beat as in the previous movement. the men of the line, at every higher toned beat. (the orchestra commencing with the left hand bamboos.) raise the right leg from the knee, behind the body, & with the following deeper toned beat bring it back again. Meanwhile the row of inner men with the first or higher beat, have bent back as far as the body can go & with the succeeding beat ~~crane~~^{swing} forward the body stiffly in the opposite curve till the staff, ~~strikes~~ held by the end in both hands, strikes the middle of the other man's bamboo.

[This movement. The Tammear say is the most difficult of all to execute in time together and the bystanders crane forward to watch for those of the inner line who are before or behind their companions in the swinging back or forwards]

At his pleasure the wizard brings this to a conclusion by the descent of his staff as the inner row bend forward. The orchestra marks the conclusion by an extra hearty bang of the ~~staves~~ *Sum Sums* and repeated twice again, while the three beats are accompanied by three loud "Ha, Ha, Ha" from all (except the dancers. During these three shouts the dancers spring into position N°1 (right hand side figure and rest there for the pause.



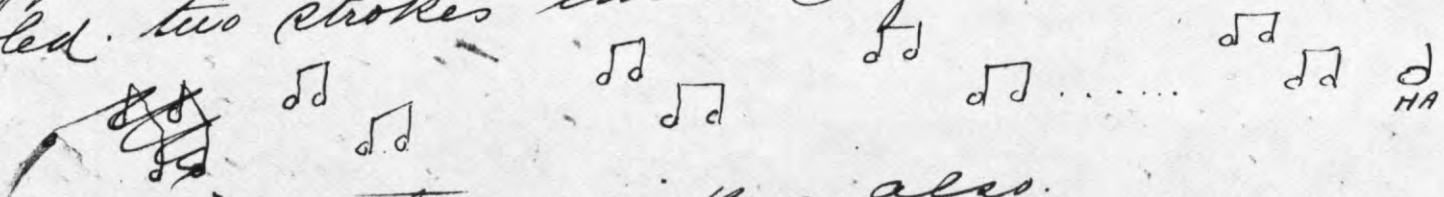
Movement No 4

The outer row of men take the staff by the top open end in the left hand. The inner men do the same with the right hand and to the equal beats of the Turn Soms. They keep time using the staff in the same manner as the orchestra are doing, but raising it at the higher (left hand) beat of the orchestra & bringing it down to the ground at the deeper beat. (i.e. keeping ~~time~~ time with the right hand of the orchestra) At each ~~upward~~ raising of the staff the arm & leg on the other side to ~~the~~ it is raised and lowered as the staff descends with a thud on the ground. Conclusion with a single "HA" at the down stroke



Movement No 5

Somewhat similar to No 4, but the staff does not touch the ground and is held by both hands, more toward the middle while with the upward movement the leg is lifted like the military "marking time" but with a bent knee. Instead of the up & down movement of the leg being confined to one side as in No 4, in this the legs are alternately lifted, by both lines of men, but care has to be taken not "to get out of step" i.e. that the right leg of one line is raised simultaneously with the left leg of the opposing line. The orchestra beats are doubled, two strokes instead of one as in No 4



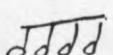
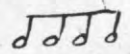
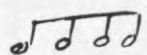
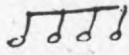
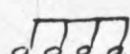
The time is rather quicker also.

Movement No 6.

The orchestra without any pause after the HA preceding, breaks into a lively humming of four beats rapidly given with each

alternating bamboos, with a pause between each change of hands enough to mark it distinctly.

The men during the four beats of one hand lean forward to each other making the bamboos touch horizontally & transversely in front of the body. At the change of ^{four beats} ~~note~~ by the other hand by the orchestra the men throw their bodies backward away from each other with uplifted arms, swaying thus back & forth in time with the higher & deeper notes respectively, the end of the movement falling on the forward attitude with the usual

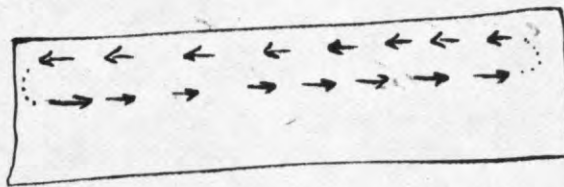
"HA"      HA

In this closing position the men stay perfectly motionless and the orchestra & bystanders in perfect silence for perhaps two or three minutes. The effect of this sudden cessation of sound and movement is very weird, under the surroundings.

Then the wizard lightly gives two taps, standing erect and merely lifting the staff by the action of the wrist and dropping it. The women, who are watching intently his actions, ~~through~~ ^{past} the men who interfere by their position, with a clear sight of the wizard, answer the two beats with their right hand bamboos, allowed to fall once. (The boys take no part in this) a pause of a second or two & the wizard repeats the dual sound, & is answered in the same way by the women, the men standing immovable as statues in their fixed position. No one may break the silence here, under pain of expulsion & not being allowed to be present at future occasions [The dogs, if any have all been tied up at a

distance, before hand] Seven times the wizard calls to the small fox hunter who refuses at first to hear him (Such is the interpretation of this part of the proceedings, given me by the wizard who performed it) by the gentle double tap with his staff and seven times "the people answer that the evil hunter has rejoiced to leave them" by the single deep toned tap in reply.

Then suddenly the orchestra commence ~~an~~ steady equal beat beginning with the right hand "Bom Bom Bom Bom Bom" &c. and the dancers wheeling quickly round a quarter turn are again in two parallel lines with their bamboos held out in front of them. Taking time by the orchestra they step forward. The outer line of men, or those nearer the wizard, has turned so as to face the West and the inner row has turned to the East so that as they step off they follow each other up one side & down the other. They

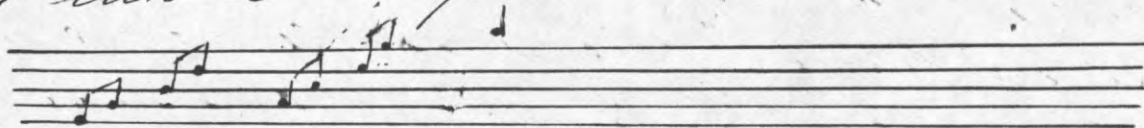


move off in line with a dancing jump from one foot.

to the other. The arms and the bamboos swaying in various ways set by one of the men who has been instructed by the wizard to act as "fugleman". He at each turn up & down alters the position of the staff he carries & the set & bend of the body & arms, but the jumpy dance of the legs is the same throughout. This is really a very pretty performance the dark bodies moving in unison like a

"ballet" presently (when the leader had displayed all the movements he ~~knew~~ ^{knew}) he shouted "Ha Ha" to each step which ~~was~~ instantly taken up by the others (in, however, a single tone for all.)

left foot Ha Ha HH HH HH HA-----A
right foot Ha Ha HH HH HH HH HA-----A dying away into a very "eerie" "diminuendo"



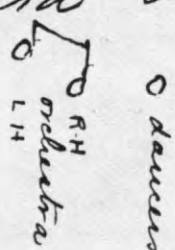
[I jotted this down from my impression at the time, but I had no instrument by which to get the notes correctly and the man left the place early next morning. I could not in his absence be quite certain that I had placed them correctly on the scale, as it was so unexpected and the rest of the even while the leader broke into this finale were chanting the "HA" for each step in the note he commenced upon. I did not follow his impromptu.

In the older time, I was told one of the 117 wizards took this leadership at the last "HA" as the rounds ceased each man had wheeled round again facing his vis a vis as before but with arms uplifted above his head as in sketch. No 8

The orchestra meanwhile kept on the monotonous beat of right and left.

Movement No 9

Suddenly the two lines dropped simultaneously to a squatting position facing each other and using their bamboos as "Jaan Jongs" put in a third beat after the orchestra's two



While they were doing this the wizard moved forward and turned along the line of the cleared space to the West holding his staff with both hands above his head as shown in N° 10 of sketch.

Passing up to the East between the ~~two~~ ^{two} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~squating~~ ^{squating} dancers & the orchestra he turned at the boundary line and followed it till he returned to the place he had started from. He then handed his staff to a man who came forward to take it (in earlier days a wizard of N° 7 class) who took it* to the hut and pushed it through the leafy wall into the tent. (In old days the N° 7 assistant wizard would have carried the staff which now contained the small por hunter inside it into the hut but the layman of the present day might not enter)

Movement N° 11.

The orchestra stopped for a moment as the wizard handed the staff to his assistant and then gave three heavy slow beats ^{with} the right hand bamboo. At the first sound of these the dancers, whose feet were opposing, exerting the muscles of the leg mutually pushed apart a little as in sketch, left hand figure. And as the orchestra fell once more into the steady monotonous beat as before repeated the accompaniment by raising their bamboos at the higher note of the women's bamboos (left hand) & bringing them down on the ground between their opened

* First pushing some magic leaves, the wizard had tied in a tuft and hung at the tent opening, into the open mouth, to imprison the hunter

out legs for the deeper note following
(the longer Soon Song of the women's right
hand) See right hand figure of sketch

N° 11. Presently the orchestra at a sign from
the wizard's hand, beat faster and the
dancers instantly shifted the grasp of
their bamboos to a position similar to
the way the women were holding the
Soon Song, but rather higher up on the
staff, pounding the ground in time with
each ~~stroke~~ beat of the women's
(This signifies I am told the
delight of both men & women at the
capture of the hantu)

Movement N° 13. The orchestra quickened
still more, and instantly the
men took up position N° 13 of sketch
the men nearest the wizard being the
left hand figure in the sketch. The
beat the inner line of men kept time
on the bamboos of the outer line held
out for that purpose, the time quickening
till the women's arms could not
work faster up & down, when suddenly
the "Jugleman" before mentioned, cried
out in time to the rapid rattling of his
staff on that of his vis-a-vis' HA-HA, HA-HA
HA-HA HA-HA &c. the others instantly
taking it up faster & faster & rising on the
scale till the "Jugleman" could not go
higher when with one loud "HA" in their
ordinary tones the bamboos stopped, both
men & women, and the men flung themselves
flat back on the ground exhausted. (See N° 14)
with their bamboos held across the chest
by both hands, lying there till the wizard
stepping slowly down the line with the
ordinary wooden "insigne" staff of hard

* Knobbly wood (one sent to you) touched
each man's bamboo with it in
turn as he proceeded along the
route he had taken when he captured
the hunter

{ These last movement mean.
#13. a festival of rejoicing
14. acknowledgement of the wizard's
power & obedience to him }

This ended the performance
and the actors therein gathered
round the three fires and discussed
each other's ability far into the night

* With the Sumner, the wizard
carries this wooden staff, now often
to perform charms with, but in
earlier years it was principally
used as a sign of his craft, and
special bamboos made for each
ceremony as a staff. But even
then the wooden staff was able to
take the place, if required of the
special bamboo ones, especially
if painted temporarily, in the
same way as the bamboo
