

COMANCHE. Texas.

Robert S. Neighbors<sup>a</sup> says:

Their principal game is the same as all the northern bands, called "bullet," "button," etc., which consists in changing a bullet rapidly from one hand to the other, accompanied by a song to which they keep time with the motion of their arms, and the opposite party guessing which hand it is in. They sometimes stake all they possess on a single game.

Col. Richard Irving Dodge<sup>b</sup> describes a game somewhat like hide-the-slipper, in which an almost unlimited number may take part:

Two individuals will choose sides, by alternate selection among those who wish to play, men or women. All then seat themselves in the parallel lines about 8 feet apart, facing each other. The articles wagered are piled between the lines. All being ready, the leader of one side rising to his knees holds up the gambling bone, so that all may see it. He then closes it in the two hands, manipulating it so dexterously that it is impossible to see in which hand it is. After a minute or more of rapid motion he suddenly thrusts one or generally both hands, into the outstretched hands of the person on the right and left. This marks the real commencement of the game, no guess of the other watching-side being permitted until after this movement. He may pass the bone to one or the other, or he may retain it himself. In either case, he continues his motions as if he had received it; passing or pretending to pass it on and on to the right and left, until every arm is waving, every hand apparently passing the bone and every player in a whirl of excitement. All this while, the other line is watching with craned necks and strained eyes for the slightest bungle in the manipulation, which will indicate where the bone is. Finally some one believes he sees it and suddenly points to a hand, which must be instantly thrust out and opened palm up. If the bone is in it the watching party wins one point, if not it loses. The other side then takes the bone and goes through the same performance. If during the manipulations the bone should be accidentally dropped, the other side takes a point and the bone. The game is usually 21 points, though the players may determine on any number.



FIG. 404. Bones for hand game; length, 2½ inches; Bannock and Shoshoni Indians, Fort Hall agency, Idaho; cat. no. 22284, United States National Museum.

<sup>a</sup> Schoolcraft's Information respecting the History, Condition, and Prospects of the Indian Tribes of the United States, pt. 2, p. 183, Philadelphia, 1852.

<sup>b</sup> Our Wild Indians, p. 329, Hartford, 1882.