

young men follow him, who, after lying on the floor in perfect silence, and fasting till their strength is almost exhausted, voluntarily submit to the most cruel tortures, during which several annually perish, but those who survive are recompensed by having acquired the honourable title of "Braves," and the hope of this distinction enables them to endure the most agonizing pain without flinching.

The *conductor of the ceremonies* now enters the lodge; he is painted yellow, and wears a cap of buffalo skin: he receives the great pipe from the *first man*, who immediately leaves the lodge and returns to the West, not to make his appearance again till the next annual celebration.

During the first three days, there is a great variety of dances and curious songs and ceremonies performed in front of the Medicine lodge, by persons fantastically dressed and painted for the occasion. They are performed round an elevated mound of earth, about six feet in diameter, and as many in height, on the top of which is placed with the greatest veneration, a model of "*the great canoe*."

The principal actors in this scene are *eight persons*,* variously painted, and nearly naked, but all carrying wreaths of willow in their hands; the season when this interesting ceremony takes place, being uniformly as soon as this tree is in full leaf; for the Indians say, that "*the twig which the dove brought to the great canoe had leaves upon it*." They consider this bird as sacred, and never attempt to destroy it.

On the third day in the midst of all this dancing and festivity, the village appears to be suddenly thrown into the utmost confusion, by the approach of a man who is seen running about apparently in great trouble. He is naked, and painted black, with the exception of his face, which is frightfully daubed with red and white. He is called by the Indians the "*Evil Spirit*." He runs from

* The number of persons who went into the Ark.