

Their heaven, or place of reward, they imagine to be a delightfully warm country, where game of all kinds is very abundant, and where corn and fruits grow without the trouble of cultivation.

Their imagined place of punishment is a climate of extreme cold; barren, and covered with eternal snows. The torments of this freezing place they describe as the most excruciating; but they also believe that those who go there will suffer for a time proportioned to their transgressions, and that they will then be admitted into the land of happiness.

Some of the Indian tribes observe an annual religious ceremony, for which great preparations are made beforehand. On the appointed morning there appears at a distance a man whom they recognize by the name of *Nu-mock-muck-a-nah*, which means, The first, or only man; he slowly and with great gravity enters the village, telling the assembled people that he is just arrived from the West. His body is painted red, he is dressed in the skins of white wolves, his head-dress is made of ravens' feathers, and in his hand he carries an enormous pipe. At his approach, the Medicine lodge, which till then had been most scrupulously kept shut, is thrown open, and the floor is seen strewn with green willow branches, and the most fragrant herbs that can be collected; it is likewise whimsically ornamented with buffalo and human skulls.

*The first man* now proceeds to enter every lodge or wigwam that compose the village, and demands from each a knife, an axe, or some such tool; and these are readily given to be sacrificed; "for, with these things," say they, "*the great canoe* was built."

These articles are then deposited in the Medicine lodge with profound veneration, until the ceremonies are all over, and they are then sacrificed, by being thrown into the water.

At sun-rise, on the following morning, *Nu-mock-muck-a-nah* opens and enters the Medicine lodge; a number of