

Over the whole of this edifice were spread the moose-skins, covering it at top and round the sides, and made fast with thongs of the same; except that on one side a part was left unfastened, to admit of the entrance of the priest.

"The ceremonies did not commence but with the approach of night. To give light within the house, several fires were kindled round the tent. Nearly the whole village assembled in the house, and myself among the rest. It was not long before the priest appeared, almost in a state of nakedness. As he approached the tent the skins were lifted up, as much as was necessary to allow of his creeping under them, on his hands and knees. His head was scarcely within side, when the edifice, massy as it has been described, began to shake; and the skins were no sooner let fall, than the sounds of numerous voices were heard beneath them; some yelling; some barking as dogs; some howling like wolves: and in this horrible concert were mingled screams and sobs, as of despair, anguish and the sharpest pain. Articulate speech was also uttered, as if from human lips; but in a tongue unknown to any of the audience.

"After some time, these confused and frightful noises were succeeded by a perfect silence; and now a voice, not heard before, seemed to manifest the arrival of a new character in the tent. This was a low and feeble voice, resembling the cry of a young puppy. The sound was no sooner distinguished; than all the Indians clapped their hands for joy, exclaiming, that this was the Chief Spirit, the TURTLE, the spirit that never lied! Other voices, which they had discriminated from time to time they had previously hissed, as recognising them to belong to evil and lying spirits, which deceive mankind.

"New sounds came from the tent. During the space of half an hour, a succession of songs were heard, in which a diversity of voices met the ear. From his first entrance, till these songs were finished, we heard nothing in the proper voice of the priest; but, now, he addressed the multitude, declaring the presence of the GREAT TURTLE, and the spirit's readiness to answer such questions as should be proposed.

"The questions were to come from the chief of the village, who was silent, however, till after he had put a large quantity of tobacco into the tent, introducing it at the aperture. This was a sacrifice, offered to the spirit; for spirits are supposed by the Indians to be as fond of tobacco as themselves. The tobacco accepted; he desired the priest to enquire, whether or not the English were preparing to make war upon the Indians? and, whether or not there were at Fort Niagara a large number of English troops?

"These questions having been put by the priest, the tent instantly shook; and for some seconds after, it continued to rock so violently, that I expected to see it levelled with the ground. All this was a prelude, as I supposed, to the answers to be given; but, a terrific cry announced, with sufficient intelligibility, the departure of the TURTLE.

"A quarter of an hour elapsed in silence, and I waited impatiently to discover what was to be the next incident, in this scene of imposture. It consisted in the return of the spirit, whose voice was again