

belief of a Supreme Being, whom they consider as the preserver, sustainer, and master of the universe. Some of their funeral rites seem to be formed upon the notion of a future state of existence. They make a large round hole, in which the body can be placed upright; it is then covered with timber, to support the earth which they lay over it. They always dress the corpse in all its finery, and put wampum and other things in the grave with it; and the relations do not suffer grass to grow on the tomb, but frequently visit it with lamentations.

They are superstitious in observing omens and dreams; they seem to stand in great awe of the owl, and are highly displeased if any person imitate the hooting of that bird in the night. We are informed by an officer, who was witness of the scene, that a boy of one of the westward nations having died, the parents made a regular pile of split wood, laid the body upon it, and burnt it; while the pile was burning they stood gravely looking on, without any emotions of grief, but when it was consumed, they gathered up the bones with many tears, put them into a box, and carried them away.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CHARACTER, MANNERS, AND
CUSTOMS OF THE INHABITANTS OF THE UNITED
STATES OF NORTH AMERICA.

Of their Persons and general Character.

THE great and sudden variation of the weather affects very sensibly the health of the inhabitants of the United States, as they are not sufficiently careful to guard against its vicissitudes. People become old in America sooner than in Europe. Upon females the influence of the climate is still more sensible. When young they are generally beautiful, and more particularly so at Philadelphia: but after twenty years of age they begin to lose