

person he most esteems, who sits down opposite to him; the pipe is then filled and fixed to the stem. The company assemble, and the most religious awe and solemnity pervades the whole. The assistant takes the pipe, which he lights, and presents to the officiating person, who receives it standing, and holds it between both hands. He then turns himself to the East, and draws a few whiffs, which he blows to that point. The same ceremony he observes to the other three quarters, with his eyes directed upwards: he then makes a speech to explain the design of their being called together, and concludes with thanksgivings and prayers to the Master of Life. He then sits down and the whole company declare their approbation and thanks by uttering the word *ho* with an emphatic prolongation of the last letter.

These rites precede every matter of great importance; if a chief is anxious to know the disposition of his people, he announces his intention of opening his medicine bag, and smoking the sacred stem, and no man who entertains a grudge against any of the party thus assembled can smoke with the sacred stem; as that ceremony dissipates all difference, and is never violated. If a contract be entered into and solemnized by the ceremony of smoking, it never fails of being faithfully fulfilled. If a person, previously to a journey, leaves the sacred stem as a pledge of his return, no consideration whatever will prevent him from executing his engagement.

The chief, when he proposes to make a feast, sends quills, or small pieces of wood as tokens of invitation to such as he wishes to partake of it. At the appointed time, the guests arrive, each bringing a dish or platter, and a knife, and take their seats on the side of the chief, who receives them sitting according to their respective ages. The pipe is then lighted, and he makes an equal