

me or enter into any kind of conversation. I thought he must be crazy, but nevertheless accompanied him to my lodge. When we had smoked, he remained a long time silent, but at last began to tell me he had come with a message from the prophet of the Shawnee. "Henceforth," said he, "the fire must never be suffered to go out in your lodge. Summer and winter, day and night, in the storm, or when it is calm, you must remember that the life in your body and the fire in your lodge are the same and of the same date. If you suffer your fire to be extinguished, at that moment your life will be at its end. You must not suffer a dog to live; you must never strike either a man, a woman, a child, or a dog. The prophet himself is coming to shake hands with you; but I have come before, that you may know what is the will of the Great Spirit, communicated to us by him, and to inform you that the preservation of your life, for a single moment, depends on your entire obedience. From this time forward we are neither to be drunk, to steal, to lie, or to go against our enemies. While we yield an entire obedience to these commands of the Great Spirit, the Sioux, even if they come to our country, will not be able to see us; we shall be protected and made happy." I listened to all he had to say, but told him, in answer, that I could not believe we should all die in case our fire went out; in many instances, also, it would be difficult to avoid punishing our children; our dogs were useful in aiding us to hunt and take animals, so that I could not believe the Great Spirit had any wish to take them from us. He continued talking to us until late at night; then he lay down to sleep in my lodge. I happened to wake first in the morning, and, perceiving the fire had gone out, I called him to get up and see how many of us were living and how many dead. He was prepared for the ridicule I attempted to throw upon his doctrine, and told me that I had not yet shaken hands with the prophet. His visit had been to prepare me for this important event, and to make me aware of the obligations and risks I should incur, by entering into the engagement implied in taking in my hand the message of the prophet. I did not rest entirely easy in my unbelief. The Indians, generally, received the doctrine of this man with great humility and fear. Distress and anxiety was visible in every countenance. Many killed their dogs, and endeavored to practice obedience to all the commands of this new preacher, who still remained among us. But, as was usual with me, in any emergency of this kind, I went to the traders, firmly believing that if the Deity had any communications to make to men, they would be given, in the first instance, to white men. The traders ridiculed and despised the idea of a new revelation of the Divine will, and the thought that it should be given to a poor Shawnee. Thus was I confirmed in my infidelity. Nevertheless, I did not openly avow my unbelief to the Indians, only I refused to kill my dogs, and showed no great degree of anxiety to comply with his other requirements. As long as I remained among the Indians, I made it my business to conform, as far as appeared consistent with my immediate convenience and comfort, with all their customs. Many of their ideas I have adopted, but I always found among them opinions which I could not hold. The Ojibbeway whom I have mentioned remained some time among the Indians in my neighborhood, and gained the attention of the principal men so effectually that a time was appointed and a lodge prepared for the solemn and public espousing of the doctrines of the prophet. When the people, and I among them, were brought into the long lodge, prepared for this solemnity, we saw something carefully concealed under a blanket, in figure and dimensions bearing some resemblance to the form of a man. This was accompanied by two young men, who, it was understood, attended constantly upon it, made its bed at night, as for a man, and slept near it. But while we remained no one went near it or raised the blanket which was spread over its unknown contents. Four strings of mouldy and discoloured beans were all the remaining visible insignia of this important mission. After a long harangue, in which the prominent features of the new revelation were stated and urged upon the attention of all, the four strings of beans, which we were told were made of the flesh itself of the prophet, were carried with much solemnity to each man in the lodge, and he was expected to take hold of each string at the top, and draw them gently through his hand. This was called shaking hands with