

It is beyond my power to picture the diligence and activity of our Barbarians in preparing themselves, and in seeking all the means and omens for good luck and success in their game. They assemble at night, and spend the time partly in shaking the dish and ascertaining who has the best hand,—partly in displaying their charms, and exhorting them. Towards the end they lie down to sleep in the same cabin, having previously fasted, and for some time abstained from their wives,—and all this to have some favorable dream; in the morning, they have to relate what happened during the night.

Finally, they collect all the things which they have dreamed can bring good luck, and fill pouches with them, in order to carry them. They [166] search everywhere, besides, for those who have charms suitable to the game, or Ascwandics or familiar demons, that these may assist the one who holds the dish, and be nearest to him when he shakes it. If there be some old men whose presence is regarded as efficacious in augmenting the strength and virtue of their charms, they are not satisfied to take the charms to them, but sometimes even load these men themselves upon the shoulders of the young men, to be carried to the place of the assembly. And, inasmuch as we pass in the country for master sorcerers, they do not fail to admonish us to begin our prayers, and to perform many ceremonies, in order to make them win.

They have no sooner arrived at the appointed place than the two parties take their places on opposite sides of the cabin and fill it from top to bottom, above and below the Andichons,—which are sheets of bark making a sort of canopy for a bed, or shelter,