

which corresponds to that below, which rests upon the ground, upon which they sleep at night. It is placed upon poles laid and suspended the whole length of the cabin. The two players are in the middle, [167] with their assistants, who hold the charms; each of those in the assembly bets against whatever other person he chooses, and the game begins.

It is then that every one begins to pray or mutter I know not what words, with gestures, and eager motions of the hands, eyes, and the whole face,—all to attract to himself good luck, and to exhort their Demons to take courage and not let themselves be tormented.

Some are deputed to utter execrations, and to make precisely contrary gestures,—with the purpose of driving ill luck back to the other side, and of imparting fear to the Demon of the opponents.

This game was played several times this Winter, all over the country; but I do not know how it has happened that the people of the villages where we have Residences have always been unlucky to the last degree, and a certain village lost thirty porcelain collars, each of a thousand beads,—which are in this country equal to what you would call in France fifty thousand pearls or pistoles. But this is not all; for, hoping always to regain what they have once [168] lost, they stake tobacco pouches, robes, shoes, and leggings,—in a word, all that they have. So that if ill luck attack them, as happened to these, they return home as naked as the hand, having sometimes lost even their clouts.

They do not go away, however, until the patient has thanked them for the health he has recovered