

The rites of the Me-da-we-win (their mode of worshipping the Great Spirit, and securing life in this and a future world, and of conciliating the lesser spirits, who in their belief, people earth, sky, and waters) was practised in those days in its purest and most original form. Every person who had been initiated into the secrets of this mysterious society from the first to the eighth degree, were imperatively obliged to be present on every occasion when its grand ceremonies were solemnized. This created yearly a national gathering, and the bonds which united one member to another were stronger than exist at the present day, when each village has assumed, at unstated periods, to perform the ceremonies of initiation. Tradition says that a large wigwam was permanently erected in the midst of their great town, which they designated as the Me-da-we-gun, wherein the rites of their religion were performed. Though probably rude in its structure, and not lasting in its materials, yet was it the temple of a numerous tribe, and so sacredly was it considered, that even to this day, in their religious phraseology, the island on which it stood is known by the name of Me-da-we-gaun.

In those days their native and primitive manners and usages were rigidly conformed with. Man nor woman never passed the age of puberty without severe and protracted fasts, in which they sought communion with some particular guardian spirit whom they considered in the light of a medium spirit between them and the "One Great Master of Life," toward whom they felt too deep a veneration, than to dare to commune with directly. Sacrificial feasts were made with the first fruit of the field and the chase. When a person fell sick, a small lodge was made, apart from the village, purposely for his sole use, and a medicine man summoned to attend and cure, and only he, held intercourse with the sick. If a person died of some virulent disease, his clothing, the barks that