

Buffalo, July 17.

A circuit court and court of oyer and terminer and general gaol delivery, commenced its sitting in this village, before Mr. Justice YATES, on Monday the 1st instant, and continued until the Thursday ensuing. Several civil causes of considerable importance were brought to trial at the circuit, but none, that we recollect, which involved any new or interesting legal principle.

At the oyer and terminer, *Soonong-gize*, commonly called *Tommy Jimmy*, the Seneca chief, who was indicted for the murder of a Squaw accused of witchcraft, was arraigned on the indictment during the second day of the court; and after having the charge explained to him by Mr. Jones, the interpreter, by the advice of his counsel, plead not guilty, with permission to withdraw the plea at any time before the trial, and substitute one to the jurisdiction of the court. Accordingly, the next day, which was assigned for his trial, his counsel interposed a plea, which in substance set forth, that long before the settlement of the late colony of New-York, and long before the state of New-York became a sovereign and independent state, the Seneca nation of Indians was a free and independent nation, possessing and exercising the rights and powers of sovereignty, among which they had hitherto always possessed and exercised, and still possess and lawfully exercise the exclusive right to try and punish members of their own nation for offences committed against other members of the nation within their territory, and particularly for the crime of murder so as aforesaid committed; which offences were exclusively cognizable by the chiefs, sachems and principal warriors of the nation, from time to time assembled. The plea then set forth that the prisoner and the deceased were, and always had been members of the nation, and that the offence stated in the indictment was committed within the territory belonging to the Senecas, and concluded in the usual form, with a prayer whether the court of oyer and terminer could or would take any further cognizance of the matter. To this plea, the district attorney, Mr. Potter, replied, traversing every fact alledged in the plea, and tendering an issue to the country, which was joined by the prisoner, and a jury impannelled for his trial. In support of the plea, the counsel for the prisoner produced several treaties concluded between the United States and the Seneca nation, which they contended completely recognized the Indians as an independent and sovereign power. Several witnesses, among whom was the celebrated *Red Jacket*, were also called to prove the customs and laws of the Senecas, and that the exercise of the powers claimed by the plea had never been disturbed or disputed, from their earliest recollection to the present day. After the evidence had closed, the case was argued to the jury, by Mr. J. C. Spencer in behalf of the prosecution, and by Messrs. A. H. Tracy, and S. M. Hopkins for the prisoner. The jury, after a few minutes absence, found a verdict that all the allegations contained in the prisoner's plea were true. A motion was then made in behalf of the prosecution, to arrest the judgment, which was entertained by the court; and the proceedings will be brought, as we understand, before the supreme court at the next term in Albany. This case awakened much interest, particularly among the Indians, great numbers of whom thronged the court house during the trial, and manifested great anxiety for the result.