

bones for fear of offending their souls, and preventing the fish from allowing themselves to be taken in their nets.¹ They held, also, in singular veneration a certain extraordinary animal which several declared that they had seen in dreams, but the figure of which they were nevertheless unable to describe. Some confounded it with Mirabichi, the God of the waters, whose fabulous and ridiculous story varies according to the different nations that recognize it.²

1667.

The worship connected with this extravagant belief, almost took the form of feasts, chants, dances, debauches, obscenities, where nothing was veiled. Polygamy, dissolution of marriages, debauchery in both sexes, prevailed among these Indians to that extent that, far from blushing at the most crying excesses, they even gave them a religious import. When an Indian asked any thing from his familiar genius, he fasted till he had had a dream, assuring him that he had obtained what he desired. In regard to diseases, the great principle of their physicians was, that they come, generally speaking, from a neglect to give a banquet after a hunting or fishing excursion.³ Sometimes, nevertheless, they attributed them to an evil genius, which had sprung upon the affected part, and been sent by an enemy. The medicine-man called in to cure the disease, after having made his reflections, and many contortions, ordered a feast and retired, promising a speedy cure.⁴

Their manners and practices.

There were, also, at Chagouamigon a great number of Huron Christians, whose faith want of instruction and privation of the sacraments had somewhat corrupted, and whose morals had suffered still more from contact with so many heathen nations. Father Allouez labored earnestly

¹ Relation de la N. F., 1667, p. 12.

² Father Allouez calls it expressly Missibizi: Relation, 1667, p. 12. Perrot calls it "the great Tiger:" Mœurs, etc., p. 19. See also as to it, Relations Inédites, i., p. 117; Rel., 1672-3, p. 172; Rale in Lettres Edi-

fiantes, vi., p. 173; De la Potherie, Histoire de l'Am. Sept., ii., p. 3.

³ Relation de la N. F., 1667, p. 13.

⁴ Father Allouez (Relation, 1667, p. 13) describes the well-known sucking of the affected part, and pretended extracting of a manitou.