

While many of my Abnakis were striving like Christians for reconciliation and favor with God, others were seeking, in reckless fashion, to excite his anger and provoke his vengeance. An appetite for liquor is the favorite passion, the universal weakness of all the Savage Tribes; and unfortunately there are only too many hands eager to pour liquor out for them, in spite of divine and human laws. Unquestionably the presence of the Missionary, by the influence due to his character, prevents many disorders. For reasons that I have related above, I was somewhat distant from my people; I was separated from them by a little wood. I could not think of passing through it at night, to go to see if good order were reigning in their camp, without being exposed to some sinister adventure, not only on the part of the Iroquois attached to the English army,—who, at the very entrance of the camp, a few days before, had torn off the scalp of one of our grenadiers,—but also on the part of our own idolaters, on whom experience had taught me that we could not depend. Some young Abnakis, joined with Savages of different Tribes, availed themselves of my absence and the darkness of the night to go, under cover of the prevailing sleep, noiselessly to steal some liquor from the French tents. When once they were in possession of their precious treasure, they hastened to make use of it; and very soon their brains were deranged. Savage drunkenness is rarely quiet, nearly always boisterous. This time it burst forth instantly into songs, dances, and noise; and, in short, it ended with blows. At daybreak it was at the height of its wildness; this was the first news brought to me on awaking. I promptly ran