

CHAPTER VI.

DISPERSION OF THE OJIBWAYS FROM THE ISLAND OF LA POINTE.

Causes of the sudden evacuation of their ancient town, as given by old traditionists—Different account obtained from old half-breeds and traders—Evil practices become in vogue—Poisoning—Feasts of human flesh—Ojibways fall under the power of their Satanic priesthood—Anecdote of the old man watching by the grave of his victimized child—The Ojibways become panic-stricken, and suddenly desert the island.

FOR the space of three generations, or one hundred and twenty years, the Ojibways remained congregated on the island of La Pointe, in one extensive town.

At the end of this period, we come to a dark chapter of their history, on which the old men dislike to linger. They are loth to tell the causes which led to the complete and sudden evacuation of their great village, and scattered them in bands and smaller villages on the adjacent shores of the Great Lake, and sent many families back on the track of their former migration to resettle the almost deserted villages of We-qua-dong and Bo-we-ting (Ance-ke-we-naw and Sault Ste. Marie).

The old men from whom I have collected the annals of this tribe, the better to get over this fearful portion of their history, assert that the dispersion from the island, was the immediate consequence to their first knowledge of the white race. Through the medium of their more eastern co-tribes, who first obtained the commodities of the "white spirits," they obtained a few guns and with this fearful weapon they all at once became formidable to their old enemies, the Dakotas and Foxes, whom they gradually drove from the vicinity of the lake shore, and caused to retreat inland toward the Mississippi. As the war parties