

with the fire-water, none dare drink it, thinking it a poison which would immediately cause death. They, however, to test its virtues, made an experimental trial on a very aged woman who—as they reasoned—had but a short time to live at all events, and whose death would be a matter of no account. The old woman drank it, appeared perfectly happy and in ecstasies, got over the effects of it, and begged for more. On which the men took courage, and drank up the remainder themselves. From that time, fire-water became the mammon of the Ojibways, and a journey of hundreds of miles to procure a taste of it, was considered but as boy's play.

They tell, also, the effect of the first gun, which they procured from the whites and introduced among the more remote and ignorant Dakotas, with whom at this time they happened to be on terms of peace. A peace party of the Ojibways visited a village of these people on the St. Croix river, and took with them as a curiosity, the dreadful weapon they had procured. While enjoying their peaceful games, the young men of the Ojibways informed the Dakotas of the fearful and deadly effects of the gun; but they, thinking that the Ojibways wished to intimidate them with an imaginary fear, reviled and laughed at the instrument, and in their disbelief they even offered to bet against its deadly effects. The dispute becoming high, the bet was taken, and a Dakota brave in utter derision, insisted on offering the back part of his body as a prominent mark. He was shot dead on the spot. With difficulty the peace-party succeeded in returning safely home, for the wrath of the Dakotas was aroused at the death of their warrior, and the old feud was again renewed, though from this time they evinced a mortal fear of the gun, which their remoteness from the white strangers precluded them from obtaining, till many years after the Ojibways had been fully supplied.