

and looked upon as old women, which is a term of great reproach among them. We cannot then wonder, that the Indian tribes are so constantly at war, as it is the only thing that gives them fame and consequence among themselves. I was told of a tradition of the Sioux, that in ancient times a man could not get a wife until he had killed an enemy. The mother trains her sons to believe that revenge upon their enemies is a cardinal virtue, and this advice and admonition are constantly instilled into their minds.

From early infancy they believe in minor evil spirits, and in ghosts who operate upon, and influence them. While sleeping in a camp of Indians in the night, you will frequently be awakened by the firing of guns, and enquiring the cause you will be told they are shooting the dead that trouble them. Over-loading their stomachs, as they often do, they are no doubt frequently troubled with the night-mare, and imagine that they are attacked by a ghost, and get up and shoot at their supposed intruder. They have also their doctors and astrologers, who are well paid for their services. When a person is sick, they send for a doctor, who gets his pay in advance. He then commences shaking over the sick his gourd, which has in it some beads to make it rattle, until he finds out what is the matter with his patient, which he generally discovers is, that some beast, fish or bird has got into the body of the patient, which by shaking his rattle, singing and other necromancy, he causes to depart. Previously to driving out the unwelcome intruder, he cuts its figure or likeness out of birch bark, and places it in front of the door of the lodge, with two young men situated so to fire at it from different directions at a given signal, who generally blow it into pieces. If this operates upon the mind of the patient so that he recovers, it is well; if not, there is some mistake about it—the animal was not killed, or some evil spirit operates against him. So they try it over again, and probably continue to do so for months, until the patient recovers or dies; in which latter case, they have always good reasons to show why the patient did not recover.