

our present generation. The condition of the bones furnished indisputable proof of their great antiquity. The skulls were so completely reduced to their earthy constituents that they were exceedingly brittle and fell in pieces when removed and exposed to the atmosphere. The metallic remains however, of more enduring material, as also, several stone chisels, gouges made of the same durable material, and probably designed for tapping the sugar maple, and some flint arrow heads, all remain in their original condition, and furnish evidence of the same rude arts which we know to be still practiced by the aborigines of the far west. A few yards distant from this spot, and at about the same depth from the surface, another circular place of sepulture was exposed to view ; but here the organic remains had been subjected to the action of fire, and the charred and partly consumed bones, with the charcoal ashes, bore testimony to the fact that the decomposition which time and the action of their mother earth would have produced, had been anticipated by the hand of man and his use of the fiery element. With reference to the question whether these copper remains are of European or native origin, I have only further to remark, that their structure is very rude ; that they appear to have been wrought solely by means of the hammer, without the melting pot or the aid of fire ; that while they were accompanied by stone and flint tools and weapons, no implements were found made of iron, which would have been the metal chosen by the European artizan ; and finally that the copper appears to correspond in quality with the specimens of the native metal now found in such large quantities on the shores of Lake Superior. There is also a curious fact, which these relics appear to confirm, that the Indians possessed the art of hardening and tempering copper, so as to give it as good an edge as iron or steel. This ancient Indian art is now entirely lost.

For these reasons, as well as from the nature of the soil, which is one likely to preserve organic remains for a very long period of time, and the greatly decomposed state in which the bones were found, I should not hesitate to pronounce these instruments, tools and weapons of much older construction than the discovery of Canada by Europeans. In this part of the continent one might expect to find something bearing the stamp of Gallic manufacture as the French were the first to ascend the St. Lawrence and remained for some time masters of its shores. Whereas in none of the relics which I have seen is there any thing which one could for a moment suppose to be of French workmanship.