

PERSONAL MEMOIRS

OF A

RESIDENCE OF THIRTY YEARS

WITH THE

INDIAN TRIBES

ON THE

AMERICAN FRONTIERS

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and such as to assure me in the propriety of the step I took, in resolving to proceed to the capital, without the approval of the secretary and acting governor (Horner), who was, indeed, from his recent arrival and little experience in this matter, quite in the dark respecting the true condition of Indian affairs in Michigan. The self-constituted Ottawa delegation of chiefs from the lower peninsula had preceded me a few days. After a conference between them and the Secretary of War, they were referred to me, under authority from the President, communicated by special appointment, as commissioner for treating with them. It was found that the deputation was quite too local for the transaction of any general business. The Ottawas, from the valley of Grand River, an important section, were unrepresented. The various bands of Chippewas living intercalated among them, on the lower peninsula, extending down the Huron shore to Thunder Bay, were unapprized of the movement. The Chippewas of the upper peninsula, north of Michilimackinack, were entirely unrepresented. I immediately wrote, authorizing deputations to be sent from each of the unrepresented districts, and transmitting funds for the purpose. This authority to collect delegates from the two nations, whose interests in the lands were held in common, was promptly and efficiently carried out; and, when the chiefs and delegates arrived, they were assembled in public council, at the Masonic Hall, corner of 4½ street, and negotiations formally opened. These meetings were continued from day to day, and resulted in an important cession of territory, comprising all their lands lying in the lower peninsula of Michigan, north of Grand River and west of Thunder Bay; and on the upper peninsula, extending from Drummond Island and Detour, through the Straits of St. Mary, west to Chocolate River, on Lake Superior, and thence southerly to Green Bay. This cession was obtained on the principle of making limited reserves for the principal villages, and granting the mass of Indian population the right to live on and occupy any portion of the lands until it is actually required for settlement. The compensation, for all objects, was about two millions of dollars. It had been arranged to close and sign the treaty on the 26th of March, but some objections were made by the Ottawas to a matter of detail, which led to a renewed discussion, and it was not until the 28th that the treaty was signed. It did not occur to me, till