

PERSONAL MEMOIRS

OF A

RESIDENCE OF THIRTY YEARS

WITH THE

INDIAN TRIBES

ON THE

AMERICAN FRONTIERS

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land, is on his route to Lake Superior, and, as he passes through Mackinack, I write to introduce him to you, as a gentleman with whom you would be pleased to have more than a transient association. The name of his father is connected with many north-western events of much interest and notoriety, and a most agreeable recollection of his mother, Lady Selkirk, has recommended him strongly to our kindness. I feel assured you will befriend him, in the way of information, as to the best means of getting on to the Sault St. Marie."

I found the bearer an easy, quiet, young gentleman, with not the least air of pretence or superciliousness, and one of those men to whom attentions ever become a pleasure.

Aug. 2d. Hon. John Norvell, U. S. S., calls my attention to the recent annexation to Michigan of the vast region north of the Straits of Michilimackinack.

"Your personal knowledge," he observes, "of the country on Lake Superior, which, by a late act of Congress has been annexed to, and made a part of the State of Michigan, induces me respectfully to request of you information concerning the nature and extent of the territory thus attached to the State; the qualities of its various soils; the timber and water-powers embraced in it; its minerals and their probable value; the extent of lake-coast added to Michigan; the fisheries and their probable value and duration; the capabilities and conveniences of Lake Superior and the northern Michigan shores, and the cheapness and facility with which a communication may be opened with the lower lakes; together with such other information as it may be in your power to furnish, and as may enable the people of Michigan duly to appreciate the importance of the acquisition." *Vide* Letters of Albion in reply.

16th. Mr. Daniel B. Woods, of New York, announces the project of the publication of "a religious and missionary souvenir," and solicits my aid in the preparation of an article.

26th. The citizens, merchants, and traders of the town agree not to sell or furnish whisky or ardent spirits to the Indians during the payments and preliminary examinations—a conclusive evidence this that, where the *interests* of the population combine to stop the traffic in ardent spirits, it requires no Congressional or State laws. *Sept. 26th.* John G. Palfrey, Esq., editor of the *North Ame-*

rican Review, wishes me to review Mr. Gallatin's forthcoming paper on the Indian languages, which is about to appear in the second volume of the collections of the American Antiquarian Society.

28th. A busy business summer, replete with incident and excitement on the island, closes this day by the termination of the several classes of payments made under the treaty of March 28th, 1836. Upwards of four thousand Indians have been encamped along the pebbly beaches and coves of the island, and subsisted by the Indian Department for about a month. To these an annuity of \$42,000 has been paid *per capita*. Of these there were 143 chiefs, namely, 25 of the first class, 51 of the second, and 67 of the third class, who received an additional payment of \$30,000. In addition to the provisions consumed, two thousand dollars worth of flour, pork, rice, and corn were delivered to the separate villages in bulk prior to their departure, and one hundred and fifty thousand dollars in the best quality of Indian goods and merchandise, cutlery, and other articles of prime necessity, systematically divided amongst the mass. The sum of two hundred and twenty thousand dollars has been paid on accounts exhibited to the agent, and approved by the creditors of the two tribes. One hundred and fifty thousand dollars have also been paid to the half-breed relatives of the two tribes on carefully prepared lists.

These several duties required care and involved responsibilities of no ordinary character. They have been shared by Major H. Whiting, the Paymaster of the Northern Department, by whom the funds were exclusively paid, and John W. Edwards, Esq., of New York, who divided the half-breed fund, to both of whom I am indebted for the diligence with which they addressed themselves to the duty, and the kindness and urbanity of their manners.

So large an assemblage of red and white men probably never assembled here before, and a greater degree of joy and satisfaction was never evinced by the same number. The Indians went away with their canoes literally loaded with all an Indian wants, from silver to a steel trap, and a practical demonstration was given which will shut their mouths forever with regard to the oft-repeated scandal of the stinginess and injustice of the American government.

Not a man was left, of any caste or shade of nativity, to utter a word to gainsay or cavil with the noble and high public manner