

of society. To see gentlemen selecting wives of the nut-brown natives, and raising children of mixed blood, the traders and clerks living in as much luxury as the resources of the country would admit, and the *engagees* or boatmen living upon soup made of hulled corn with barely tallow enough to season it, devoid of salt, unless they purchased it themselves at a high price—all this to an American was a novel mode of living, and appeared to be hard fare; but to a person acquainted with the habits of life of the Canadian peasantry, it would not look so much out of the way, as they live mostly on pea soup, seasoned with a piece of pork boiled down to grease; seldom eating pork except in the form of grease that seasons their soup. With this soup, and a piece of coarse bread, their meals were made; hence the change from pea soup to corn is not so great, or the fare much worse than that which they had been accustomed to, as the corn is more substantial than peas, not being so flatulent. These men engaged in Canada generally for five years for Mackinaw and its dependencies, transferable like cattle to any one who wanted them, at generally about 500 livres a year, or in our currency, about \$83.33; furnished with a yearly equipment or outfit of two cotton shirts, one three point or triangular blanket, a portage collar, and one pair of beef shoes; being obliged, in the Indian country, to purchase their moccasins, tobacco, pipes, and other necessities, at the price the trader saw fit to charge for them. Generally at the end of five years, these poor *voyageurs* were in debt from fifty to one hundred and fifty dollars, and could not leave the country until they had paid their indebtedness; and the policy of the traders was, to keep as many of them in the country as they could; and to this end they allowed and encouraged their *engagees* to get in debt during the five years, which of necessity required them to remain.

These new hands were by the old *voyageurs* called in derision, *mangeurs de lard*—*pork-eaters*—as on leaving Montreal, and on the route to Mackinaw, they were fed on pork, hard bread, and pea-soup while the old *voyageurs* in the Indian country ate corn-