

interesting reading matter. Under such circumstances it became necessary that we should devise some means to enliven our time, and we did so accordingly; and I look back upon those years as among the most agreeable in my life.

The country, at that early day, was destitute of roads or places of public entertainment—nothing but the path, or “Indian trail,” traversed the wide expanse of forest and prairie from Lake Michigan to the Mississippi, and the travel by land was performed on foot or horseback; but there was then another mode of locomotion, very generally adopted by those who took long journeys—now become obsolete, and which would doubtless be laughed at by the present “fast going” generation—that of the Indian or bark canoe. I will not take time to describe the *vessel*, as most of you have doubtless seen such, and perhaps many, now present, have taken voyages in these frail *barks*. The canoe was used in all cases where comfort and expedition were desired. You may smile at the use of the terms “comfort and expedition,” where the traveller sat cooped up all day in a space about four feet square, and at night encamped on the bank of the stream, cooked his own supper, and slept upon the ground, with no covering but a tent and blanket, or, oftentimes, nothing but the wide canopy of heaven—having, after a day of toil and labor by his crew, accomplished a journey of thirty to forty miles! But these journeys were not destitute of interest. The *voyageur* was enlivened by the merry song of his light-hearted and ever happy Canadian crew—his eye delighted by the constant varying scenery of the country through which he passed—at liberty to select a spot for his encampment, and to stop, when fatigued with the day’s travel—and above all, free from care and from the fearful apprehensions of all modern travellers on railroads and steamboats, that of being blown up, burned or drowned.

I can better illustrate this early mode of travel, by giving an account of a “party of pleasure,” undertaken and accomplished by myself. In May, 1830, being obliged to go on the