

At this time, and for years after, I became very familiar with them; for, on this occasion, they tendered me much friendly advice how to conduct myself with the Indians, to beware of the cunning deceit, treachery, etc., of the traders, with whom I was about to mix up. This was the first good counsel I had heard on commercial business; and, to this day, it has been of service to me.

Here it became necessary to engage an interpreter, to perform also the duties of steersman. Only one suitable person could be found, and he must feed with the bourgeois. That was well enough, but he had an overgrown squaw wife, with two papooses not long hatched, and they must join the same mess. In stating to Mr. Frank my awful predicament, he laughed at me and said: "You can't better yourself; besides you will find that, in many cases, two or three incumbrances, or even half-a-dozen, such as your delicate ideas abhor, luxuriate in the same canoe." I could not help myself, so the next day was fixed for a start.

Tomorrow came. I took my breakfast with my friends. I found a nicely fitted place for me, immediately over six kegs of powder, of three hundred pounds weight—plenty to end our terrestrial journey by adding a spark. Contrary to a very old custom, and much to the annoyance of the smokers, I absolutely prohibited lighted pipes on the canoe. A nice location was fixed for Mrs. Bartram near her husband, Mons. Bartram, the interpreter. All this added no little incumbrance to the canoe.

We embarked, and away we started for the Portage du Ouisconsin, sixty leagues distant. Proceeding three miles, we came to the beginning of a six mile rapid, the greater part of which Lady Bartram and I had to take dry land to overcome, in order to relieve the canoe of surplus weight, as the men had to wade and carefully avoid the rocks, in dragging the canoe up this toilsome obstruction. The slow process of working up the rapids gave time for splendid fishing sport. Black bass were very abundant, and I caught enough for supper and breakfast for all on board.

Having at length overcome all the rapids, the water being low, the men were well tired, and I said "camp." The tents were soon up, the interpreter having one for himself and family; and