

aids-de-camp. A band of music, too, must needs be provided. It consisted of a bass-drum, improvised from an empty nine gallon keg, one head out, and a deer-skin tightly drawn over it, with a small wooden hammer for a drum-stick; a tambourine, and two dried gourds, partly filled with pebbles; together with a variety of rattles of minor importance. These made up the band. A little concert was given in the evening to test the ability of the performers. This ended the first day's progress of the campaign. Sentries being posted, each one, wrapped in his blanket, lay down on the soft grass, covered by a deer-skin, and bespangled with brilliant stars, to make the most of a short night.

Daylight next morning brought our pickets to camp, when pipes were cleaned out, and the first smoke of the new-born day went round. Teeth were taxed to their uttermost to munch the stone-hard dried venison; after which we were, scouts and all, at our respective posts, *en route* for our anxiously looked-for field of battle. The taking of a single scalp would have crowned the whole party with lasting honor, in their estimation. We went forward with muffled paddles, carefully scrutinizing every noise, the course of every deer or bird, which might indicate an approaching foe; and withal, carefully weighing the frequent reports, however improbable, of the principal scouts.

About noon we were called to halt, to have a *big war-dance*. On landing, and stepping forward a few yards from the canoes, I found myself in a beautiful patch of prairie-land, forming a circle of forty paces in diameter, as regular as if drawn by a compass. It was enclosed by thick shrubbery, with here and there a tall balsam, and other evergreens. Nature had provided a splendid locality—eminently fitted for a social, enjoyable picnic, where boys and girls could romp, and hide and go-seek—dance, eat and grow fat. But it was not to be so honored now. On the contrary, Old Nick himself was to be invoked, and the most beastly ceremony to be performed I ever witnessed.

After all were landed from their canoes, a party of five or six were dispatched to the bush for a pole, while the others were employed in removing all impediments from within the circle. The bushmen soon returned with a balsam pole, about forty feet long,