

be detached without taking off a piece of it. If this happened but once a day it would be a trifle; but, on the contrary, they perform this manœuvre throughout the whole journey.

This is not all; it very frequently happens that on the way waterfalls or cascades are encountered, up or down which one cannot go; then one has to disembark at the foot of the cascades, and carry his canoe on his shoulders, with all the goods or beaver-skins through the woods, until he is above the falls, and then re-embark. This is called a portage. Some of them are 200 leagues in length.¹

The Canadians are thus obliged to perform this constant and arduous work for 300 leagues before reaching Missilimakinak. This shows how strong, vigorous, and hardened to fatigue they are; and it seems incredible that the human body should be able to resist such extraordinary cold.

When they arrive there, instead of thinking to rest a little after their fatigue, they hasten as fast as possible to divide into parties and go farther. They generally re-equip themselves with canoes and provisions; after which some proceed to the north of lake Superior, and others to the south, and penetrate by means of rivers 200 or 300 leagues into the interior of the country. Others, following lake Michigan, go southward to the most distant nations. The only object they have in view is to get beaver-skins.

When the voyageurs have sold their goods, they return to Missilimakinak, and usually reach that place at the beginning of July; there they once more equip themselves to go down in a convoy, if the commandant of the country deems it advisable. It is therefore clear and very easy to understand that those who trade and traffic in beaver-skins are obliged to go at least 1,000 leagues before getting back to Montreal; but, in addition, it is impossible to conceive the dangers to which they expose themselves in running and passing through boiling rapids, waterfalls, and cascades, the thought of which makes one's hair stand on end.

¹There is obviously some error here, probably in the transcription from the original document; but, as historical students are generally aware, there are many such inaccuracies in Margry's publication.—ED.