

aware that this singular state of things is full of mutation, and must soon undergo great changes, if not entirely pass away. The fur trade, itself, which has given life to all this portraiture, is essentially evanescent. Rival parties of trappers soon exhaust the streams, especially when competition renders them heedless and wasteful of the beaver. The fur-bearing animals extinct, a complete change will come over the scene: the gay free trapper and his steed, decked out in wild array, and tinkling with bells and tinketry; the savage war chief, plumed and painted, and ever on the prowl; the traders' cavalcade, winding through defiles or over naked plains, with the stealthy war party lurking on its trail; the buffalo chase, the hunting camp, the mad carouse in the midst of danger, the night attack, the stampado, the scamper, the fierce skirmish among rocks and cliffs,—all this romance of savage life, which yet exists among the mountains, will then exist but in frontier story, and seem like the fictions of chivalry or fairy tale.

Some new system of things, or rather some new modification, will succeed among the roving people of this vast wilderness; but just as opposite, perhaps, to the habitudes of civilization. The great Chippewyan chain of mountains, and the sandy and volcanic plains which extend on either side, are represented as incapable of cultivation. The pasturage, which prevails there during a certain portion of the year, soon withers under the aridity of the atmosphere, and leaves nothing but dreary wastes. An immense