

nature to be effectually transferred to the page. Mountains and vallies, the dreary waste, and wide-spreading forests, the lakes and rivers succeed each other in general description; and, except on the coasts of the Pacific Ocean, where the villages were permanent, and the inhabitants in a great measure stationary, small bands of wandering Indians are the only people whom I shall introduce to the acquaintance of my readers.

The beaver and the buffalo, the moose-deer and the elk, which are the principal animals to be found in these countries, are already so familiar to the naturalists of Europe, and have been so often as well as correctly described in their works, that the bare mention of them, as they enlivened the landscape, or were hunted for food; with a cursory account of the soil, the course and navigation of lakes and rivers, and their various produce, is all that can be reasonably expected from me.

I do not possess the science of the naturalist; and even if the qualifications of that character had been attained by me, its curious spirit would not have been gratified. I could not stop to dig into the earth, over whose surface I was compelled to pass with rapid steps; nor could I turn aside to collect the plants which nature might have scattered on the way, when my thoughts were anxiously employed in making provision for the day that was passing over me. I had to encounter perils by land and perils by water; to watch the savage who was our guide, or to guard against those of his tribe who might meditate our destruction. I had, also, the passions and fears