

establishment—during which time they sold me a great many furs—set out again to return to their distant wigwams. It is strange to contemplate the precision and certainty with which these men travel towards any part of the vast wilderness, even where their route lies across numerous intricate and serpentine rivers. But the strangest thing of all is, the savage's certainty of finding his way in winter through the trackless forest, to a place where, perhaps, he never was before, and of which he has had only a slight description. They have no compasses, but the means by which they discover the cardinal points is curious. If an Indian happens to become confused with regard to this, he lays down his burden, and, taking his axe, cuts through the bark of a tree; from the thickness or thinness of which he can tell the north point at once, the bark being thicker on that side.

For a couple of weeks after this, I remained at the post with my solitary man, endeavouring by all the means in my power to dispel ennui; but it was a hard task. Sometimes I shouldered my gun and ranged about the forest in search of game, and occasionally took a swim in the sea. I was ignorant at the time, however, that there were sharks in the Gulf of St Lawrence, else I should have been more cautious. The Indians afterwards told me that they were often seen, and several gentlemen who had lived long on the coast corroborated their testimony. Several times Indians have left the shores of the gulf in their canoes, to go hunting, and have never been heard of again, although the weather at the time was calm; so that it was generally believed