

Simpson as soon as possible. La V.'s custom was to take the left bank of the river going up stream; but on this occasion, for no particular reason which he could give, he agreed with his men to take the right side. They had not long past the region of the smoky banks*, when a sound was heard which caused the three men simultaneously to stop their paddling and listen. It occurred again and yet again, at long intervals; one man pronounced it a dog, but La V. shook his head, and declared it to be the cry of an infant, and that he would put ashore and ascertain if it were not so. Very faint was that cry, and waxing, even as they listened, still more feeble;

* "The region of the smoky banks." These fires, called "Boucanes" by the Canadians, occur in several parts of the Mackenzie and Athabasca district. In the neighbourhood of Lake la Biche, and also along the miry bank, a number of jets of hot steam find vent through the mud, and make the waters of the river bubble. Above Fort Norman, on the Mackenzie, in several spots the banks give out smoke and occasionally flames. These fires have existed for ages, and are regarded with the greatest awe and superstition by the Indians. A little higher up the river there are hot springs and a small Solifera, like the larger one near Naples.