

stipulated, which reduced our stock by exactly two and a half gross: and in less than ten minutes after the whole cavalcade, goods and all, disappeared, leaving us standing in suspense and amazement. While we were in this painful state of anxiety, one man and an Indian were left to guard the canoes, whilst the rest of us, carrying what we could on our backs, followed the Indians on foot to the other end of the portage, where we arrived at sunset, and found, to our great satisfaction, all the property laid together in safety, and guarded by the chiefs. Having paid the Indians what we promised, and a small recompense to the different chiefs, we arranged our little camp for the night, the chiefs promising us their protection. All the Indians now flocked around us, men, women, and children, and spent the whole night in smoking, dancing and singing, while we kept watch in the centre of the ominous circle. During the night, however, notwithstanding the chief's guarantee of protection, we perceived some suspicious movements, which gave us considerable alarm. We had recourse again and again to the chiefs, who at last admitted [116] that there was some indication of danger; but added that they were still our friends, and would do their utmost to protect us. Just at this moment, as we were consulting with the chiefs, several harangues were made in the camp, the smoking ceased, and the women and children were beginning to move off. It was a critical moment; we saw the cloud gathering, but could not dispel it; our fate seemed to hang upon a hair. At last we hit upon a stratagem; we persuaded the chief to come and stop within our little circle for the night, which they did, and from that position they harangued in turn, which had a good effect, and in this manner we passed the night, not forgetting every now and then to give the chiefs

some little toy or trifle, to stimulate their exertions in our favour.

Early in the morning of the 3rd, four of us returned to the other end of the portage, and by two o'clock got one of the canoes safe across. Returning again immediately, we arrived with the other a little after dark; one man still remaining across, taking care of the canoe-tackling and camp utensils. The Indians all the day kept dancing and smoking, and it was our interest to keep them so employed as much as possible; and no one knew better how to do so than Mr. Stuart, his eye saw everything at a glance, and his mild and insinuating manners won their affections.

As night came on, the Indians were to be seen divided in groups, as if in consultation; but there [117] appeared no sign of unanimity among them; each chief seemed occupied with his own little band, and we learned that they were not all one people, with one interest, or under one control, and this divided state no doubt added greatly to our safety; for wherever we found one chief alone, he invariably pointed to the others as bad men, calling them sho-sho-nez, or inlanders. Not knowing, however, who were our friends or who our foes, we had to keep a strict watch all night.

At daybreak on the 4th, three of our men crossed the portage for the remainder of the goods, and arrived safely at an early hour, but had enough to do to save their kettles from some scamps they met with on the way.

The length of this dry and sandy portage is nine miles; and when it is taken into consideration that we had to go and come all that distance four times in one day, without a drop of water to refresh ourselves, loaded as we were, and under a burning sun, it will be admitted that it was no ordinary task. Under any other circumstances but a