

power the two can exert over the direction of the boat. These men, from long training, become very expert, and acquire a coolness and disregard of danger that claim admiration, and astonishes those who are unused to such scenes.

To all appearance, there is seldom to be found a more laborious set of men; nor one so willing, particularly when their remuneration of no more than seventeen pounds sterling a year, and the fare they receive, are considered. The latter would be considered with us incapable of supporting any human being. It consists of coarse unbolted bread, dried salmon, fat (tallow), and dried peas. I am satisfied that no American would submit to such food: the Canadian and Iroquois Indians use it without murmuring, except to strangers, to whom they complain much of their scanty pay and food. The discipline is strict, and of an arbitrary kind; yet they do not find fault with it. In Appendix XV., will be found one of the agreements of the Hudson Bay Company. Very few of those who embark or join this Company's service ever leave the part of the country they have been employed in; for after the expiration of the first five years, they usually enlist for three more. This service of eight years in a life of so much adventure and hazard, attaches them to it, and they generally continue until they become old men; when, being married, and having families by Indian women, they retire under the auspices of the Company, to some small farm, either on the Red or Columbia rivers. There is no allowance stipulated for their wives or children; but one is usually made, if they have been useful. If a man dies, leaving a family, although the Company is not under any obligation to provide for them, they are generally taken care of. The officers of the Company are particularly strict in preventing its servants from deserting their wives; and none can abandon them without much secrecy and cunning. In cases of this sort, the individual is arrested and kept under restraint until he binds himself with security not to desert his family. The chief officers of the Company hold the power of magistrates over their own people; and are bound to send fugitives or criminals back to Canada for trial, where the courts take cognizance of the offences. This perhaps is as salutary and effectual a preventive against crime, as could be found, even if the courts were at hand; for whether innocent or guilty, the individual must suffer great loss by being dragged from the little property he possesses. The community of old voyageurs, settled in Oregon, are thus constrained to keep a strict watch upon their behaviour; and, although perhaps against their inclinations, are obliged to conform to the wishes of those whose employ they have left.