

Carson had the advantages of a scientific education, he could have collected, arranged and published an account of his travels and discoveries, and thus enrolled his name among the great names of earth, especially of the New World. But had he had these advantages in early youth, very probably his talents would have found some other channel than that of a fearless Indian fighter and hardy hunter. As it was, however, Carson was the forerunner of another who was to put on record in durable shape the wonderful discoveries made in the great West.

Carson proceeded to Fort Bent, where he engaged himself to Cols. Bent and St. Vrain as hunter to the fort. This position he held eight years. His business was to supply the inmates with food. There were forty mouths to feed, and it was no small undertaking to provide by means of rifle and trap, food for all these. Yet Carson did it. We can easily imagine how one of his temperament and previous experience would enjoy the chase. He might have returned to the bounds of civilization, but he preferred the company of Cols. Vrain and Bent, and the exhilarating chase. Dr. Peters says Carson was bound to the fort by other ties than those of fondness for the duties of his office. He was in debt to Col. Vrain; not a pecuniary obligation bound him, but a debt of gratitude, for Col. Vrain first discovered and directed Carson's peculiar adaptability for the life he afterward led.

While he was engaged as hunter at the fort a messenger came from the Comanche Indians, who had united with the Arapahoes to drive back the Sioux, the latter having come from their northern home to invade the hunting grounds of the two tribes mentioned. The messenger said they wanted Carson to lead them against the enemy. He consented to go to their council of war, but he persuaded them to seek peace with the Sioux. After much entreaty, they yielded. The result was that the Sioux were dissuaded from their purpose and returned without molesting the other tribes.