

on one end, and is a conspicuous object in these parts. How it got there nobody knew, although one might think it had dropped from the clouds.

The south-west wind was gradually freshening, so that when we arrived at "Les Ecors"—a long reach of coast about twenty miles in length, and formed of precipitous cliffs some fifty or sixty feet high, where there is no harbour, and if overtaken in a storm, one has to run for it—it became a moderate gale. It is wonderful what a sea these frail canoes can stand, when well managed, although a false stroke from the steersman would send the whole affair to the bottom. We arrived at Michipicoton in the evening, and here I remained for two days, transacting the business of the district, along with the Governor and some of the other officers. After that the Governor set out for Montreal, and I returned to Fort William.

George Simpson was a native of Ross-shire; he was born towards the close of the last century, I think in the year 1792 or 1793. After receiving the best education which the parish schools could afford in those days, and passing through one or two terms in the University of Aberdeen, he removed to London, and entered the counting-house of a firm engaged in the West India trade, Messrs. Webster, Simpson and Scott, one of the partners being his own relative. I will not enter at any length into the details of his life, which was invariably the same round of duty, and marked by few incidents worthy of notice. In early life he was remarkable for that energy and vigour of character which up to the close of his career distinguished him. Among other houses engaged in the West India trade in those days, was the firm of Colville, Wedderburn & Company, with which the house of Webster, Simpson, & Scott, had extensive business transactions, of which Mr. Simpson had the charge. He attracted the attention of Mr. Colville, a shrewd man of business, and who, if not Governor, was certainly a Director of the Hudson's Bay Company, at that time. The height of Mr. Simpson's ambition then, no doubt, was to be admitted a partner into the firm which he served, and no doubt would have been so, in course of time. A different destiny awaited him. There is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune; and George Simpson was carried along with it.

About the year 1817 or 1818, the great fur trade of North America was a bone of contention, as, in fact, it was several years before, between the two rival companies, the North West Company, trading from Montreal, and the Hudson's Bay Company, trading from London, by the way of Hudson's Bay. About this time the latter Company was on the