

British Columbia. To this day our Pacific coast preserves the name of Captain Vancouver, who, during the years, 1790-'95, explored our western limits, and returning westward circumnavigated the globe. The account of his voyages, edited by his brother, was published in six volumes, in London, 1801.

The discovery of the western coast of the continent drew attention to it on the part of the United States Government. Accordingly, a detachment of the United States Army was fitted out to ascend the Missouri River and cross the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific. This was accomplished by the expedition under Captains Lewis and Clarke during the years, 1804-'05-'06. The party journeyed some 9000 miles. The account of the expedition was published in the United States, and afterwards in London, 1815. In 1805 an exploration of the Upper Mississippi was undertaken, at the instance of the Government of the United States, by Lieut. Pike. The object of the party was successfully accomplished, and the account of it forms an interesting volume, published in London, 1811. In 1823, a journey to Lake Winnipeg and Lake of the Woods was undertaken by a party under Major Long, of which an account is given by Professor Keating. We should mention also, in company with this, the work of J. C. Beltrami, published in two volumes in London in 1828, and entitled "A Pilgrimage to Europe and America, leading to the Discovery of the Sources of the Mississippi and Bloody River," (*i. e.*, the Red River.)

Stimulated alike by the struggle between the Hudson's Bay Company and the Northwest Company, and by these successful explorations of the country towards the Pacific on United States territory, John Jacob Astor pushed on his fur-traders to the far West. Not only does Irving's "Astoria" give us, as has been said, an account of this, but we are fortunate in possessing important narratives by a number of the traders themselves, who passed through the turmoil of the Oregon fur trade. Among the traders belonging to the Astor Company was one Alex. Ross, well-known afterwards as sheriff of the district of Assiniboia, on Red River. Sent out to the Pacific coast in 1811, he remained there until the year 1825, when he returned over the Rocky Mountains, and with his Indian wife came to reside in the Selkirk colony on Red River. One of his works, published in 1839, is an account of the early settlement of the Columbia River in the period with which we are dealing.

Another of Astor's companions, a Frenchman from Montreal, named Gabriel Franchère, has left us a most valuable book in his own tongue. In it he relates the incidents of his return home overland, in 1814, by crossing the Rocky Mountains, floating down the Saskatchewan, journeying over the "Grand Portage" to Fort William, and passing down the lakes to Montreal. In 1854, an English translation of Franchère's work appeared in New York. The Astor fur-traders seem to have had a taste for writing, for, of the same party as the preceding, another, named Ross Cox, published in 1832 an account of his journey around Cape Horn, his residence for six years on the Columbia River, and his return, in 1817, by a route nearly the same as that of Franchère.

## VII.

The settlement of the colony by Lord Selkirk, in the valley of Red River, was an event of the greatest importance in the history of British America. It saved for Britain, as it appears to the writer, the fertile plains of the Northwest. That philanthropic nobleman