

ship of the enormous area of North America north and west of the Canadian provinces. No regard of course was paid to any rights of the natives, who as a matter of fact were dying out rapidly from the effects of bad alcohol and epidemic diseases.

His motive was to establish large colonies of stalwart Highlanders as the tenants of a Chartered Company. Alexander Mackenzie had already called the north-west country "New Caledonia". Lord Selkirk wished to make it so in its population.

Already he had been instrumental in establishing a Scottish colony on Prince Edward's Island,<sup>1</sup> which, after some difficulties at the beginning, had soon begun to prosper. Two or three years later he came to Montreal, and there collected all the information he could obtain from the partners in the North-west Company regarding the prospects of trade and colonization in the far west. In the year 1811 he had managed to acquire the greater part of the shares in the Hudson's Bay Company, and, placing himself at its head, he sent out his first hundred Highlanders and Irish to form a feudatory colony in the Red River district (the modern Manitoba). He also dispatched an official to govern what might be called the Middle West on behalf of the Hudson's Bay Company. This person, acting under instructions, claimed the whole region beyond the provinces of Upper and Lower Canada as the private property of the Hudson's Bay Company, on the strength of their antiquated charter issued by Charles II. The agents of the North-west Company were warned (as also the two or three thousand French Canadians and half-breeds in their pay) that henceforth they must not cut wood, fish or hunt, build or cultivate, save by the permission and as the tenants of the Hudson's Bay Company.

<sup>1</sup> Prince Edward's Island is off the north coast of New Brunswick. It was named after Queen Victoria's father, the Duke of Kent.