
The Passing of the Company

The Hudson's Bay Company knows nothing. It only fears. The British Government knows nothing; except that in such a way did it lose Oregon; and the United States is now buying Alaska from Russia. With its policy of matchless foresight, the Hudson's Bay Company realizes it is wiser to retire early with the laurels and rewards than to retreat too late stripped. The question of renewing the license on Vancouver Island is on the carpet. The Hudson's Bay Company welcomes a Parliamentary Enquiry into every branch of its operations. "We would be glad to get rid of the enormous burden of governing these territories, *if it can be done equitably as to our possessory rights*," the Company informs the astonished Parliamentary Committee.

How stand those possessory rights under the terms of union in 1821? It will be remembered the charter rights were not then tested. They were merged with the Northwest Company rights, and without any test a license of exclusive trade granted for twenty-one years. That license was renewed in 1838 for another twenty-one years. This term is just expiring when the Company declares it would be glad to be rid of its burden, and welcomes a Parliamentary Enquiry. At that inquiry, friends and foes alike testify. Old officers like Ellice give evidence. So do Sir George Simpson, and Blanchard of Van-