

them against the rocks, while the steps leading from scaffold to scaffold were so narrow and irregular that they could scarcely be traced by the feet without the greatest care and circumspection; but the most perilous part was when another rock projected over the one they were clearing.

The Hakamaw Indians certainly deserved Fraser's grateful remembrance for their able assistance throughout these alarming situations. The descents were, if possible, still more difficult; in these places the white men were under the necessity of trusting their property to the Indians, even the precious guns were handed from one Indian to another; yet they thought nothing of it, they went up and down these wild places with the same agility as sailors do on a ship. After escaping innumerable perils in the course of the day, the party encamped about sunset, being supplied by the natives with plenty of dried fish.

Thus the main lines of the exploration of the great Canadian Dominion were completed. Alexander Mackenzie went to England in 1799 and received a knighthood for his remarkable achievements. On his return he first definitely created the New North-west or "X. Y." Company, and then brought about its fusion (after several years of bitter rivalry) with the old North-west Company; and it was this united and strengthened organization which, between 1804 and 1819, sent out so many bold pioneers to fill in the details of the map between the Columbia and Missouri on the south, and the Great Slave Lake and Liard River on the north. But during these years the energies of the Hudson's Bay Company were reviving under a strange personality—THOMAS DOUGLAS, EARL OF SELKIRK. Lord Selkirk conceived the idea of putting new life into the Hudson's Bay Company, reviving the monopolies of trading granted in its old charter, and turning its vague rights to land into the absolute owner-