

rivers; and the means of transportation are bark canoes. Furthermore, these waters are interrupted in at least an hundred places by falls and rapids, along which the trader has to carry his merchandise on his back, and over an hundred and thirty carrying places, from twenty or thirty yards in extent to thirteen miles, where both canoe and cargo have to be conveyed by the same means.

• These are some of the obstructions which the North West Company encounters; yet their exports from Quebec alone are valued at more than a million of dollars annually, without reference to those brought to the United States, and shipped from New York and Philadelphia direct to China, rather than incur the cost and delay in procuring them a passage to London, and thence to India, in the ships of the East India Company. Indeed, it appears that many of the goods of that company, destined for this trade, particularly on the coast of the Pacific, are shipped to Boston and immediately reshipped in American vessels for the benefit of drawback. These vessels are sometimes employed to make a voyage for them from the mouth of Columbia to Canton. To illustrate more fully the increasing value of this trade, it is only necessary to observe, that from Quebec in 1803, there was exported the skins of six hundred and fifty thousand seven hundred and twenty-nine quadrupeds, ninety-three thousand seven hundred and seventy-eight of which were of the beaver: since that time they have extended their trade beyond the Rocky mountains, and have, as has already been observed, established themselves at the mouth of Columbia: the amount of their export from that port cannot be ascertained, but it is thought to be of great value. The Hudson's Bay Company is believed to be considerable, and, from a state of former depression, is fast becoming the rival of the other, but for several years past have withdrawn their traders from the west side of the Rocky mountains: they have fewer difficulties to overcome in arriving at the highest point of navigation, than the North West Company; their route is through the Hudson's Bay, the Nelson river, to Lake Winnipic; thence, by passing other lakes, they ascend the Red River to their establishment, which is within ninety miles of the Missouri river; at a point called the Mandoh villages. This river takes its rise in the Rocky mountains in about the forty-third degree of latitude, and observes a course north and north-east towards Hudson's Bay until it arrives at the Mandan villages, a distance of nearly 1200 miles, when it turns short to the south, without any apparent cause, and joins the Mississippi; the water running to the Hudson's Bay at that point, approaching within one mile, and no hill or high ground to separate them of any magnitude. Yet, notwithstanding the many advantages which the Hudson's Bay Company possessed over the North West Company, the earl of Selkirk, the patron of the former, and a man of uncommon enterprise, was exceedingly desirous to obtain the privilege of supplying his establishments upon the Red River by ascending the Mississippi to the St. Peters, thence to its source in Stone Lake, then, by a short portage through open woods