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RECENT EXPLORATIONS IN CANADA.

INTRODUCTORY SKETCH—By GEORGE M. DAWSON, C. M. G., F. R. S., F. G. S.

In March 1890, now nearly seven years ago, I had the pleasure of addressing the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club on the *Larger Unexplored Regions of Canada*. The subject is one in which those who have actually taken part in exploratory work naturally feel much interest, but I was surprised by the amount of general interest evidenced in it, and by the wide currency given by the press to the remarks then made. It was in fact a surprise to many people to learn that, although they had been accustomed to see the northern part of the continent shown in apparent detail on maps of very small scale, much of the detail was really based upon no actual geographical knowledge, and that there were vast areas which had never even been traversed by reconnaissance surveys, about which practically nothing had been ascertained, and in which the courses of rivers, the position and even the existence of great lakes and other features was practically unknown.

An appeal for the further exploration of such tracts, was made, based primarily on their possible economic value, but it was also pointed out, that whether valuable or not, a certain sentimental and territorial responsibility rested upon Canada, to at least inspect and examine all parts of her vast landed property. The back of Canada's farm lies somewhere near the North Pole, and between our cultivated fields and that point, lie immense reserves of timber, lakes, and seas well stocked with fish, and above all where other resources fail, great possibilities in the way of mineral wealth. We may reasonably look forward to a time, when even in the Arctic lands important mining communities will be planted.

It was necessary to assume some method in defining the regions characterized as unexplored, for in such a matter there is no hard and fast line. After leaving the districts which may