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A FRAGMENT OF CANADIAN HISTORY.*

BY PROFESSOR BRUCE.

THE writer of the History of the Dominion of Canada has a great work before him. It is as great a task as the explorer of a great river has when entering its embouchure he sails up to diverge and examine one branch, to return and repeat his quest in another, and after all to leave unvisited a hundred rivulets which go to make up the stream. The History of Canada must start from such different sources as the discovery of the Prima Vista in 1497; the Nouvelle France of Jacques Cartier in 1535; the Acadie of the heroes of "Evangeline" in 1604; the Rupert's Land of the Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay in 1670, and extending westward until it embraced—from Hudson's Straits to Vancouver's Island, discovered in 1762—all the country not possessed by any

other Christian Prince or State; the British Canada of the soldiers of Wolfe of 1759; and the refuge of the United Empire Loyalists from 1783 to 1812. Starting from such different sources, the History of Canada comes down to the present time, when British North America is beginning to realize her unity under the Canadian Confederation. This paper is a fragment of such history, torn from the volume that must be written by some patient and earnest investigator who can make the whole subject a life-work. It is an imperfect sketch of the history of the Hudson's Bay Company and its opponents, from their adventurous beginning to the year 1821, when all united in one great company bearing the name of the oldest, though not most vigorous partner. The embarkation of English gentlemen in foreign trade was the result of the successful voyages of Drake and his contemporaries, when, as a species of freebooters, they sailed the seas with the motto of the brave Robin

* Sir Alexander McKenzie's Travels; Hargrave's Red River; Neill's History of Minnesota; Reports of the British House of Commons; Ross's Red River Settlement.