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### *The Conquest of the Great Northwest*

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standard to protect their rights, whichever of the other three parties came uppermost in the struggle. Poor children of the wilds, of a free wilderness life forever past! Their leader was unworthy, and their stand a vain breakwater against the inward rolling tide of events resistless as destiny!

The Company had told the Parliamentary Committee of '57 that it would willingly remit the burden of governing its enormous territory if adequate returns were made for its possessory rights. Without going into the question of these rights, a syndicate of capitalists, called the International Financial Association, jumped at the chance to buy out the old Hudson's Bay. Chief negotiator was Edward Watkins, who was planning telegraph and railroad schemes for British America. "About what would the price be?" he had casually asked Ellice, now an old man—the same Ellice who had negotiated the union of Hudson's Bay and Nor'Westers in '21. "Oh, perhaps a million-and-a-half," ruminated Ellice; but Berens, whose family had held Hudson's Bay stock for generations, was of a different mind. "What?" he roared in a manner the quintessence of insult, "sequester our lands? Let settlers go in on our hunting ground?" But the cooler heads proved the wiser heads. It was "take what you can get