

adventurer or his party explored the Saskatchewan, and his immediate successor, St. Pierre, in 1752 reached the Rocky Mountains at the very point where the Canadian Pacific Railway now enters the pass to cross the Rockies.

As so often happens to pioneers, the adventurous French explorers did not enjoy the fruit of their labours. In 1759, the conquest of Canada by the British cut the connection with the new Northwest. But the field for enterprise was too tempting to be left long unvisited. British merchants from Montreal, in 1766 and following years, took up the unused canoe and paddle; and traders, named Curry and Finlay, pushed over Verandrye's route, reached the source of the fur-supplies of the Hudson's Bay Company and intercepted the Indian trappers, who had before gone down the streams to Hudson Bay. The intruders were now taking the trade down Lake Superior to Montreal. Like a sleeping giant roused to action, the English fur company left the shores of Hudson Bay, penetrated to the interior, and the first meeting of the Montreal and English traders took place, it is said, in 1774, at Fort Cumberland on the Saskatchewan. Here began the conflict which for nearly fifty years was maintained between the Northwest Company and that of Hudson Bay, resulting in the depletion of both, and their final coalescence in 1821.

The Northwest Company had been most energetic in its efforts to dot the whole country with posts. It followed in the wake of one of its illustrious partners, Sir Alex. Mackenzie, and crossed the Rocky Mountains, becoming the forerunner of British occupation on the Pacific slope. Beyond the Rocky Mountains this enterprising company, uniting the perseverance of its hardy Scottish leaders (many of them Jacobite refugees to Canada, or their descendants) with the love of adventure of their French Canadian *voyageurs*, met another band of fur-traders, the Astor Fur Company of New York, formed in 1809 to trade upon the Columbia River. Washington Irving has made the story of the Astor Company familiar to us all.

I have merely drawn a bare sketch of the leading lines by which our country was first reached, and shown how the stimulus of the fur trade led to the early occupation of almost every part of Canada. It will be observed that I leave out of notice in this paper the remarkable and, I trust, by Canadians never to be forgotten movement of the United Empire Loyalists; also that part of it—the transference of the loyal Indians to Canada, as well as the subsequent influx of an immense British immigration to our shores—as not included so directly under the head of exploration. My main object in this paper is to give some account of the literature of these several movements originating in the peltry trade, and to recommend some plan for its preservation.

The several lines of exploration of which I have spoken seem to divide themselves up as follows:—

1. The military colonization of New France.
2. The English occupation of Hudson Bay.
3. The penetration to the new Northwest by Verandrye.
4. The growth of the Northwest Company of Montreal.
5. The inland movement of the Hudson's Bay Company.
6. The formation of the Astor Company; and the expedition of Lewis and Clarke up the Missouri and over the Rocky Mountains.
7. The conflict of the fur companies; the establishment of Selkirk colony; and the coalescence of the rival companies.