

" But their leader, moved with anger,
Gives the word to fire upon us ;
And imperiously repeats it,
Rushing on to his destruction.

" Having seen us pass his stronghold,
He had thought to strike with terror
The Bois-brûlés : ah ! mistaken,
Many of his soldiers perish.

" But a few escaped the slaughter,
Rushing from the field of battle ;
Oh, to see the English fleeing !
Oh, the shouts of their pursuers !

" Who has sung this song of triumph ?
The good Pierre Falcon has composed it,
That the praise of these Bois-brûlés
Might be evermore recorded."

Such was the triumphant spirit of the Nor'-westers ; but their triumph was a short one. The death of Governor Semple served to hasten on the Earl of Selkirk, who with his band of soldiers of the old De Meuron regiment took Fort William, and in due time reached the scene of the unfortunate collision. The skirmish of "Seven Oaks," which Pierre Falcon commemorates, has had its effect on all subsequent affairs in the Red River region and, while giving a prestige to the Bois-brûlés element in the North-west, has done much to encourage that lawlessness which has so disfigured the country since. The wide extent of territory, the facility this gave for escape, and the difficulty of detection have made it easy for bodies of men to accomplish, by a coup-de-main, what they might never be called to account for, and which only involved the risk of the encounter itself. It is a danger-

ous thing for a country when this is the case ; and it is to be hoped that, under Canadian rule, a more settled state of affairs may follow, and that the conviction may grow in the popular mind that, though justice may be long delayed, yet a Nemesis is certainly and unremittingly pursuing the guilty. The few years succeeding hostilities were spent by the settlers in overcoming the natural difficulties of their situation and in gaining a foothold in the country. It will be the duty of the future historian to tell of their privations, of their betaking themselves to the chase of the buffalo and deer, and of their losses by the locust ; to recount their journeyings to the United States for supplies, and to tell of the state of comparative tranquillity, if not inertia, which succeeded their fiery trials, occasionally interrupted by the floods which have alarmed or the internal dissensions which have disturbed them. Lord Selkirk, the founder of the colony, died in 1821, after which, at the instance of the British Government, the Companies, both reduced to the verge of bankruptcy, brought their tedious negotiations to an end and, uniting heartily, formed the Hudson's Bay Company, which, with all its faults, has been a respectable, energetic and honourable Corporation, and has performed the signal service to Canada and the British empire of keeping a vast extent of territory, in danger of being Americanized, true to its allegiance, and of making every Indian respect the Scotch bonnet and the trader known to be one of King George's men. The history from 1821 to the present is a subject full of interest to the Canadian.