

SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE.

Born in the Highlands of Scotland, Alexander Mackenzie came as a lad to Canada. In the year 1779 the young Celtic adventurer entered the counting-house of Gregory and Macleod, Montreal; in 1784 he joined the firm as a partner, being in charge of an expedition to Detroit. In 1785 the young partner pushed on through Lake Superior to the Grande Portage, and on the union of the different fur interests became, in 1787, a partner of the Northwest Company. This company was an extensive concern. It employed, at this time, fifty clerks, seventy-one interpreters and clerks, one thousand one hundred and twenty canoe-men, and thirty-five guides. As already mentioned, most of the partners and clerks were Celts, the employés French-Canadians. In 1789 Mackenzie was stationed at Fort Chippewyan on Lake Athabasca, and in that year undertook his great journey of discovery to the north. With four canoes, containing his mixed crews of French-Canadians and Indians—both men and women—he discovered the great river which bears his name, and by it, about the end of July in that year, reached the Arctic Sea. On this voyage the young adventurer was without books or necessary instruments, and knew nothing of the sciences of astronomy and navigation. With great perseverance, on his return, he undertook a journey to Great Britain, and spent the winter of 1791 in England perfecting his knowledge for future enterprises. Having returned to Lake Athabasca, in October, 1792, the fearless explorer undertook his celebrated