

## Janey Canuck in the West

The factors are now known as agents. It is a sad degradation. The word factor was adopted into our language from the Latin, without a modification. It means a man who acts—one who does things. An agent, it seems to me, does not stand for so much. He is only "a half-sir," as the Irish say.

Three years ago The Big House at Edmonton was burned down. It was thirty-two years old, and had been built by Chief Factor Hardisty, whom the Indians called *Meekoostakawan*, because of his reddish hair.

The previous Big House was erected in the early days of the last century, and was known as "Rowand's Folly," because of its pretentiousness; that is to say, it was three stories high, and had a very large ball-room.

Before Rowand died, he expressed a wish that his bones be sent home to Quebec, for burial. This meant a journey of over three thousand miles by land, and the Indians were not instructed in the art of embalming bodies. What was to be done?

The factor had said his "bones." Here was the solution, and it fell to Koomeniekoos, a Cree chief, to put it into execution.

The Cree boiled the body and picked the bones clean of flesh, then they were ready for transportation. He also ate a piece of the factor's heart, in order that he might inherit his spirit.

One turns over many papers and records to find out what the spirit of Rowand was. This is what I learn. It was told by Joe Macdonald, an old guide, to Katherine Hughes, our provincial archivist.

"Rowand was strong and proud. Yes, men feared him; but we needed no chickens to rule. It was only big-hearted men who could live in those days."

The Company's Gentlemen had their houses beside