

DAVID THOMPSON, A GREAT GEOGRAPHER.

By J. B. TYRRELL, Toronto, Canada.

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It gives me a great deal of pleasure to have the opportunity of submitting to this distinguished assembly a few of the facts on which I venture to claim that David Thompson, of whose achievements but little note has been taken, was the greatest land geographer that the British race has produced.

A poor boy from a London charity school, he spent most of his life on the northern part of this continent when it was a wilderness, peopled only by the natives and by a few fur traders, who had little groups of houses or factories, often hundreds of miles apart, scattered along the principal waterways.

He was a fur trader in the employ of the Hudson's Bay and North-West Companies, and in the prosecution of this trade he travelled many thousands of miles in canoes, on horseback, and on foot through what was then a vast unmapped country, extending from Montreal on