

that it is the scene of these brave and hardy voyageurs leaving, that Moore has described in the well-known "Canadian Boat Song." At Ste. Anne's rapid they were compelled to take out a part of their lading, and once past this, they bade good-bye to the associations of home, for at Ste. Anne's was the last Christian church, and this church dedicated to the tutelary saint of the voyageurs. The great combination working from far-off Montreal, to a point west of the Rocky Mountains, carried on their operations so vigorously that they were rewarded by the highest dividends ever made by a similar Company in America. But, as is so frequent, success and ambition brought dissension; and a small section, among whom were the Right Hon. Edward Ellice, M. P., since so famous in connection with the Hudson's Bay Company, and Sir Alexander Mackenzie, the traveller, broke off dissatisfied, and formed the X. Y. Company. Three rival companies made the country a scene of constant warfare, sometimes of bloodshed; and Indians and whites were frequently brought into collision at the imminent risk of the total extermination, should the animosity of the savage tribes become general, of the whole three companies. In 1811, matters had reached a very unsatisfactory condition, when a new element entered into the circumstances and completely changed the aspect of affairs. In this year Lord Selkirk, who is described by an American writer as a "wealthy, kind-hearted, and visionary nobleman of Scotland," joined the Hudson's Bay Company and obtained a controlling power in it. Whether he was not more shrewd than visionary is a question on which very much might be said; that his plans did not all succeed is but the experience of many a speculator. The waning influence of the Hudson's Bay Company and decreasing dividends rendered a bold and vigorous policy necessary. The North-west Company had a longer season, more active and more experienced agents, and had gained a pres-

tige fully equal to that of the Company, which had reached an age of a century and a half. To meet the power of the rivals it was necessary to gain a stronger foothold in the country, to have numbers who might be appealed to in case of necessity, and moreover to produce agricultural supplies at a point nearer even than Canada to the great fur-bearing region of the North. The courage of a man who could take a colony of men, women and children, after a sea voyage of thousands of miles, to winter on the frozen shores of Hudson's Bay, and then proceed five hundred miles inland, to settle fifteen hundred miles from the nearest white settlement, must have been considerable, the object he had in view an important one, and the necessity for such a course very great. Moreover the willingness of a colony of settlers to leave the old world and begin life in a land that they believed was infested by "wild beasts and wilder men" must ever seem strange. At this juncture, fortunately for Lord Selkirk's scheme, an expatriated people had the choice of going abroad or of being drowned in the German Ocean. One of those harsh and selfish acts which have made many a colonist look back to the home of his childhood—in other respects a pleasing recollection—with the feeling of bitterness and retaliation, drove forth from the estates of the Duchess of Sutherland thousands of poor exiles to find homes in the New World. Lord Selkirk visited the hapless community and induced a number of them to colonize the land he had procured from the Hudson's Bay Company by purchase.

It is not the object of this paper to enter with any minuteness into the history of this colony. Suffice it to say that the privations they endured were rarely if ever equalled in the early settlement of any country. Women carrying helpless children were compelled to walk with bleeding feet over the frozen earth; strong men gave way, overcome by hunger and melancholy, and the poor settlers