

In these feelings Mrs. McKenzie to some extent shared; but Archie and Rose-Marie were blissfully unconscious of anything of the kind, and they looked about them with wide-open eyes of wonder and delight.

Fort William was then at the zenith of its greatness, and formed quite a considerable village. Its center of interest was an immense wooden structure containing the grand banqueting-hall, the council chamber, and other rooms, fitted up with a certain sort of rude splendor, and adorned with Indian weapons and trophies of the fur trade. Here were assembled, for the purposes of consultation, the chief partners from Montreal — men of imposing presence, and luxurious ways; in the eyes of the *voyageurs* and half-breeds the most important personages in the world — and the subordinate partners from their posts in the interior, with forms and faces showing the effects of toil and privation during summer heat and winter cold.

Intensely curious and interested, the two young people went about together, missing nothing that was worth seeing, and forming their own opinions concerning the McTavishes, the Frobishers, and the other grandees from wonderful Montreal. These gentlemen had come to the annual meeting in great state, voyaging in huge canoes lined with rich furs, propelled by a score of stalwart paddlers, and freighted with abundant stores of costly wines and civilized delicacies for the sumptuous banquets