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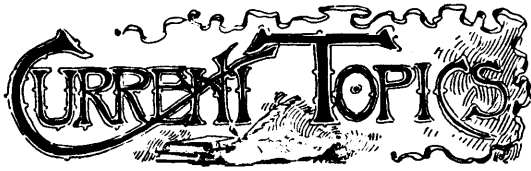
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The seventh volume of the "Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, just issued by Messrs. Dawson Brothers, contains a paper of more than ordinary value on "Expeditions to the Pacific," by Mr. Sanford Fleming, C.M.G. Two maps (those of De l'Isle, 1752, and of Jeffrey, 1768), reproduced from the works of H. H. Bancroft, illustrate the extraordinary misconceptions as to the configuration of the northern shores of this continent that prevailed until a comparatively late date. The most interesting portion of the paper to Canadian students is that which deals with the overland expeditions. Its great value lies in the fact that the author is thoroughly acquainted with the routes and scenes that he describes. The first period of land exploration westward extends from 1793 to 1846, and is mainly associated with the efforts of the fur companies to expand the limits of their domain. Sir Alexander Mackenzie takes the lead. Mr. Fleming gives a lucid sketch of his career, with a vivid pen portrait of the man, based on Lawrence's painting. He next treats of the travels and discoveries of Mr. Simon Fraser (1805-1808), whose descent of the river that bears his name is strikingly described in Senator Masson's work, "Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest." The explorations of David Thompson (1790-1811), Alexander Henry (1811-14), Gabriel Fanchère (1814), Ross Cox (1812-17), D. W. Harman (1800-19), Alexander Ross (1811-25), John McLeod (1822-26), Sir G. Simpson (1828), David Douglas (1825-34), and Robert Campbell (1830-43) next come under notice. The period that follows closes with the old régime of the Union. It is led off by Mr. Paul Kane (1846-48), who is mentioned so frequently by Sir Daniel Wilson in his "Prehistoric Man"—Indian life and character being the chosen themes of that artist's pencil. The Earl of Southesk, who accompanied Sir George Simpson on his last trip to Red River, journeyed thence to the heart of the Rockies, reached the sources of the Bow River, and returned by the South Saskatchewan and Forts Carlton and Pelly. Captain Palliser, with Dr. Hector (whose unhappy experience is commemorated in the name of the Kicking Horse) and other associates undertook (1857-60) explorations, the results of which are contained in a report presented to the Imperial Parliament. Mr. M. Lawrin, a veteran miner (1861), made the journey from Quesnelle Mouth to Fort Garry. Dr. A. P. Reid and five others suffered much distress in reaching Fort Colville (June 13—November 26, 1861). This last adventure brings the record down to the migration of the immigrants of 1862, of which we gave an outline in our last issue. The travels of Lord Milton and Dr. Cheadle (1862-63) and the journey of Dr. John Rae (1864) bring the history of the North-West exploration to the era of Confederation.

This fruitful era, which is triumphantly closed by the completion of our transcontinental railway, virtually begins with Mr. Fleming's remarkable expedition, the story of which is instructively and charmingly told in Principal Grant's "Ocean to Ocean." His second journey in 1883 practically closes the list of overland journeys of exploration (if we except the valuable work of the Geological Sur-

vey, necessarily piecemeal, and the inspections from time to time of the railway corps), for trips by San Francisco hardly come under that category, and vice-regal progresses form a class by themselves. Of the whole series, however, as it stands in Mr. Sanford Fleming's paper, Sir Hector Langevin is at the head. His mission was a most important one, being undertaken in connection with his department in order to ascertain what public works were necessary in the new province. He visited Victoria, New Westminster, Yale, Lytton, Cariboo, Bute and Burrard Inlets, Nanaimo, Barclay Sound and other points on the coast and in the interior, the results of his inquiries being afterwards published in a volume. Last summer we had occasion to recall, by way of contrast with the present, some details in the account of Adjutant-General P. Robertson Ross's expedition, which is included in the Militia Report for 1872. It seems only the other day since we were reading "The Wild North Land," of Capt. (now General Sir) W. F. Butler (1872-73). Dr. G. M. Dawson's report of his share, as naturalist, in the Boundary Commission's operations (1872-74) is one of the most valuable volumes in the series of the Geological Survey. In 1871 Dr. Selwyn himself inaugurated the geological examination of the Western province, which, conducted from year to year, has brought to light the wealth, variety and economic importance of its natural resources. The long quest for the North-West passage ended on the 7th of November, 1885, and there was pertinence in the selection of Sir Donald Smith to strike the blow which indicated that the goal was reached. "By common consent," writes Mr. Fleming, "the duty of performing the task was assigned to one of the four directors present—the senior in years and influence, whose high character placed him in prominence—Sir Donald Alexander Smith. No one could on such an occasion more worthily represent the company or more appropriately give the finishing blows which, in a material sense, were to complete the gigantic undertaking. Sir Donald Smith braced himself to the task and he wielded the by no means light spike hammer with as good a will as the professional tracklayer. The work was carried on in silence. Nothing was heard but the reverberation of the blows struck by him. It was no ordinary occasion; the scene was in every way noteworthy from the groups that composed it and the circumstances which had brought together so many human beings in this spot in the heart of the mountains, until recently an untracked solitude. Most of the engineers, with hundreds of workmen of all nationalities, who had been engaged in the mountains, were present. Everyone appeared to be deeply impressed by what was taken place. The central figure in the group was something more than the representative of the railway company which had achieved the triumph he was consummating. His presence recalled memories of the Mackenzies and McTavishes, the Stuarts, Macgillivrays, the Frasers, Finlaysons, McLeods, McLoughlin's and their contemporaries who first penetrated the surrounding territory. From his youth he had been connected with the company which so long had carried on its operations successfully from Labrador to the Pacific and from California to Alaska. Suddenly a cheer spontaneously burst forth, and it was no ordinary cheer. The subdued enthusiasm, the pent-up feelings of men familiar with hard work now found vent. Cheer upon cheer followed as if it was difficult to satisfy the spirit which had been aroused. Such a scene is conceivable on the field of a hard fought battle at the moment when victory is assured."

As a pendant to Mr. Fleming's vivid picture of this scene, so memorable in the history of the Dominion, it may be worth while to recall that a little more than sixteen years before the last spike was driven in the first trans-continental railroad north of the Gulf of Mexico. Connection between the Union and Central Pacific lines took place at Promontory Point, Utah Territory, on the 10th of May, 1869. "There were men," writes the historian, "from the pine-clad hills of Maine, the rock-bound coast of Massachusetts, the ever-glades

of Florida, the golden shores of the Pacific slope, from China, Europe and the wilds of the American continent. . . . The hour and minute designated arrived, and Leland Stanford, president, assisted by other officers of the Central Pacific came forward. T. C. Durant, vice-president of the Union Pacific, assisted by General Dodge and others of the same company met them at the end of the rail, where they reverently paused while the Rev. Dr. Todd, of Massachusetts, invoked the divine blessing. Then the last tie, a beautiful piece of workmanship, of California laurel, with silver plates, on which were suitable inscriptions, was put in place, and the last connecting rails were laid by parties from each company. The last spikes were then presented—one of gold from California, one of silver from Nevada, and one of gold, silver and iron from Arizona. President Stanford then took the hammer, made of solid silver—to the handle of which were attached the electric wires—and with the first tap on the head of the gold spike at 12 noon the news of the event was flashed all over the continent. Speeches were made as each spike was driven, and when all was completed cheer after cheer rent the air from the enthusiastic assemblage." Fourteen years earlier the first inter-oceanic railway, that of the Isthmus, from Aspinwall, on the Caribbean Sea, to Panama, on the Pacific Ocean, had become an accomplished fact. Though the shortest of such lines, the difficulties to be surmounted in its construction were enormous, and the cost in human life was deplorable. The first train carrying passengers from ocean to ocean, passed over it on the 28th of January, 1855.

Mr. Sanford Fleming, in closing his survey of "Expeditions to the Pacific," suggests two themes for the brush of the patriotic artist: "On the roll of famous travellers," he writes, "there is no grander figure than that of the intrepid Scotchman who was the first to cross the continent north of the Gulf of Mexico. Can there be a more fitting subject for an historical painting for the National Gallery of the Dominion than the incident of his mixing some vermilion with melted grease and inscribing on the face of the rock on which he had slept by the shore of the Pacific this brief memorial: "Alexander Mackenzie, from Canada by land, the twenty-second of July, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-three?" Equally appropriate for a painting to hang by its side is the scene by Craigellachie on the morning of November 7th, 1885, when Sir Donald Smith, spike hammer in hand, is giving the last blow to finish the work of the railway. It marked the close of a long series of events interwoven with the annals of the northern portion of the continent. Can we doubt that the future historian will regard the occurrence as a turning-point in the history of the Dominion as the beginning of a new page in the life and destiny of the British Colonial Empire?"

Whether or not the reproach which the often-repeated proverb has cast upon comparison be altogether justifiable, we can find respectable precedent for the historical parallel. It is by this classical method that Mr. J. M. LeMoine has thought well to write the panegyric of two of the worthiest of Canadian administrators—of whom one governed under the Old Régime, the other the new. The name of La Galissonnière has to most students of English history been associated with one of those cold official murders which inspire more horror than criminal bloodshed. It was for declining to risk what he feared would be certain defeat at the hands of the French sea captain that Admiral John Byng, son of the valiant Viscount Torrington, was tried by court martial, condemned and shot in spite of the utmost efforts to save his life. Though not blameless, he deserved a far different fate. His family has for more than a century furnished England with many brave soldiers and sailors. The Comte de la Galissonnière has been best portrayed by the Swedish naturalist, Kalm, who was his guest for nearly seven weeks at the Château St. Louis. Like the great Earl of Peterborough, he was slightly deformed, but still his appearance was prepossessing. The qualities of his mind were beyond praise. His knowledge was so amazing that