

## Wherein a Lad Sees Makers of History 15

heard that night—who can tell—that drew me to the wild life of after years. But I was too young, then, to recognize fully the greatness of those men. Indeed, my country was then and is yet too young; for if their greatness be recognized, it is forgotten and unhonored.

I think I must have fallen asleep on my uncle's knee; for I next remember sleepily looking about and noticing that many of the gentlemen had slid down in their chairs and with closed eyes were breathing heavily. Others had slipped to the floor and were sound asleep. This shocked me and I was at once wide awake. My uncle was sitting very erect and his arm around my waist had the tight grasp that usually preceded some sharp rebuke. I looked up and found his face grown suddenly so hard and stern, I was all affright lest my sleeping had offended him. His eyes were fastened on Lord Selkirk with a piercing, angry gaze. His Lordship was not nodding, not a bit of it. How brilliant he seemed to my childish fancy! He was leaning forward, questioning those Nor'-Westers, who had received him with open arms, and open hearts. And the wine had mounted to the head of the good Nor'-Westers and they were now also receiving the strange nobleman with open mouths, pouring out to him a full account of their profits, the extent of the vast, unknown game preserve, and how their methods so far surpassed those of the Hudson's Bay, their rival's stock had fallen in value from 250 to 50 per cent.