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*The Celt in the North West (Geo
Bry)*

Vide inside

TRANSACTIONS

OF

THE CELTIC SOCIETY

OF MONTREAL.



COMPRISING SOME OF THE PAPERS READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY DURING
SESSIONS 1884-85 TO 1886-87.



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THE CELT IN THE NORTH-WEST.

BY

THE REV. PROFESSOR BRYCE, LL.D.,

Winnipeg.

It lacks but a year of a century since the daring and successful combination of the fur traders, known as the "North-West Company of Montreal," was formed to secure the trade of the Indian Territories. It was twenty years before this that, in 1766, the first British trader—a Scotchman, named Thomas Curry.—followed the route of the French voyageurs, which had been deserted since the capture of Canada in 1759 by the English. Curry penetrated to Cedar Lake on the Saskatchewan, and was so well recompensed by his one season's trade that he never needed to venture on the "watery ways" again. The next season another Celt, James Finlay, persevered even farther up the Saskatchewan, and returned to Montreal with a rich cargo of furs. The enterprise of the Montreal merchants began to tell upon the supply of furs which had for a century been carried down by the Cree and Chippewyan Indians to the shores of Hudson Bay. In 1774 the Hudson's Bay Company had abandoned its policy of timidly clinging to the sea-coast along the Bay, and had thrown down the gauntlet of opposition by building the Cumberland House on the Saskatche-

wan river. Pond, an American, Wadin, a Swiss, and the brothers Frobisher, Englishmen, all merchants from Montreal, had, in the year 1775 and succeeding years, carried the fur trade by their canoe route even to the distant Lake Athabasca. So early as the year 1783 we find that well-known Nor'wester and leading Celt, Simon McTavish, making an effort to combine the Montreal traders into one company. His was long one of the names to conjure by among the fur traders. Another firm of Scottish merchants in Montreal—Messrs. Gregory and Macleod—assumed an independent attitude, and undertook, like "Ta' Phairson," of the Highland legend of the flood, to have a "boat o' their ain."

It was in July, 1787, that the combination we have mentioned was formed among these Montreal merchants to trade to the Nor'west; and it is quite surprising to find the large number of Celts in the enterprise. Some of the Montreal Highlanders were Jacobites; a number of them had even fought as Rads. in the battle of Culloden, and had, after the '45, fled to New France to find new homes. More of them, however, were disbanded soldiers and their families, of the 78th and *Fraser Highlanders*, who had settled in Canada in 1764. Others, again, had been connected with the Montgomery Highlanders, and some even with the 42nd, or "Black Watch."

When, according to Lemoine, we know that "Fraser's Highlanders are now settled all over Lower Canada, and their descendants number more than three thousand," it is not surprising that such

names as McTavish, McGillivray, McLeod, McDonell, McKenzie, Campbell, Cameron, Murray, and Fraser occupy a leading place in the fur trade, and that these adventurers were raised to positions of command by their daring, and by the “*perfidum ingenium Celtarum.*”

Archbishop Taché, in his “North-west Sketches,” says:—

“At that time two great rival companies competed for the fur trade. The North-west Company, formed of, or, at least, directed by, Scotchmen, required that its members should speak French, and all its junior employés were French-Canadians, so that the company appeared to be a continuation of that formerly established in Nouvelle France. The Indians, when referring to this company, always spoke of it as ‘the French.’ The English, on the contrary, was the designation universally used in referring to the members of the Hudson’s Bay Company, although its officers were generally Scotch, and its employés Orkney-men.”

Although the Montreal merchants had united in 1787, yet, having been so long accustomed to a life of freedom and independence, they found it impossible to preserve their combination. Accordingly, in nine years after the union, viz., in 1796, a division took place. The offshoot took the name X. Y. Company. It was carried on with much vigour, and posts were built in many places contiguous to those of the Nor’westers. Two names stand out prominently among its leaders—one the Hon. Edward Ellice, the other a notable Celt, worthy of fuller notice. This was—

SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE.

Born in the Highlands of Scotland, Alexander Mackenzie came as a lad to Canada. In the year 1779 the young Celtic adventurer entered the counting-house of Gregory and Macleod, Montreal; in 1784 he joined the firm as a partner, being in charge of an expedition to Detroit. In 1785 the young partner pushed on through Lake Superior to the Grande Portage, and on the union of the different fur interests became, in 1787, a partner of the Northwest Company. This company was an extensive concern. It employed, at this time, fifty clerks, seventy-one interpreters and clerks, one thousand one hundred and twenty canoe-men, and thirty-five guides. As already mentioned, most of the partners and clerks were Celts, the employés French-Canadians. In 1789 Mackenzie was stationed at Fort Chippewyan on Lake Athabasca, and in that year undertook his great journey of discovery to the north. With four canoes, containing his mixed crews of French-Canadians and Indians—both men and women—he discovered the great river which bears his name, and by it, about the end of July in that year, reached the Arctic Sea. On this voyage the young adventurer was without books or necessary instruments, and knew nothing of the sciences of astronomy and navigation. With great perseverance, on his return, he undertook a journey to Great Britain, and spent the winter of 1791 in England perfecting his knowledge for future enterprises. Having returned to Lake Athabasca, in October, 1792, the fearless explorer undertook his celebrated

voyage, through the Rocky Mountains, to find the Pacific Ocean. He ascended the Peace River, spent the winter in trapping, and was ready on the first approach of spring, in 1793, to pass through the mountains. After incredible hardships, and amidst hostile Indians, he reached the Pacific Ocean, and, in token of his success, inscribed on a sea-side rock, with vermilion and melted grease—"Alexander Mackenzie, from Canada, by land, 22nd of July, 1793;" the first white man to cross the Rockies north of Mexico, and the first to set foot in British Columbia. It was but a fitting tribute to the Celtic discoverer, and the leading Celts of the North-west Company, that the country west of the Rocky Mountains should be called New Caledonia. A few years after Mackenzie's return to Lake Athabasca and Canada, he retired to Britain, where, in 1801, he published his interesting book of voyages, received the honours of knighthood on account of his great discoveries, and spent his remaining years.

Another of the daring kings of adventurers was a Scotchman—David Thompson—who held, with great credit, the position of

“ASTRONOMER” AND SURVEYOR OF NOR’WEST
COMPANY.

He was one of the hardiest and most enterprising explorers ever in the North-west. He had come from Britain to the Bay in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, but had given up his position, in a few years, on account of the unwillingness he had found, on the part of the company, to prosecute exploration. In 1796 Thompson, on the expiry of

his former engagement, placed himself in communication with a leading Celtic trader of the Nor'west Company, Alexander Fraser. He was gladly welcomed by the Montreal traders, and entered their service in the capacity mentioned. Leaving Fort William, on Lake Superior, in August, 1796, Thompson passed by the Grande Portage to Lake Winnipeg, then to Lake Winnipegosis to the upper Assiniboine River, down this river to the Souris, up the Souris and overland in a south-westward direction to the Missouri, back again to the Assiniboine (this Missouri journey being accomplished in the dead of winter), down the Assiniboine to Red River, and on March 7th, 1798, reached the junction of the Assiniboine and Red Rivers, where the city of Winnipeg now stands, but where, in that year, there seems to have been not even a fur trader's post.

Ascending the Red River to Red Lake, Thompson found the sources of the Mississippi much south of what the Commissioners in the Treaty of 1783 had supposed them to be. The hardy adventurer reached Lake Superior in the month of May, 1798. He continued in the service of the Nor'west Company years after this, being a most capable official, and succeeded in fixing the latitude and longitude of most of their posts. In July, 1811, we hear of Thompson arriving at the mouth of the Columbia River, and one of the rivers of the Pacific slope bears his name. On the occasion of this visit his work was the location of a fort for the company on the Columbia River. A journal of Astronomer Thompson, in manuscript, is known to be in existence.

The hardy explorer, after his days of service, spent the evening of his life at Williamstown, County of Glengarry, Ontario.

NOTED PIONEERS.

Of the adventurous race of Celtic pioneers in the fur trade was Peter Grant, who, probably, about 1790, built the first fort on Red River, very near the boundary line (49° N.), between Manitoba and the United States. From the Grant stock, and from an Indian intermarriage, sprang a very distinguished half-breed leader, of whom we shall afterwards speak—Cuthbert Grant. The McGillivray family rose to great prominence in the fur trade. There was a Donald McGillivray, a John, a Joseph, and a Simon McGillivray, but the head of the clan was Hon. William McGillivray, who was a Colonel in the Militia of Canada, a man of much local and political influence in Montreal, with strong connections in Britain, and one whose name is preserved in Fort William at the mouth of the Kaministiquia on Lake Superior.

Another noted Highlander, who was a daring Nor'wester explorer, was Simeon Fraser. In 1806 he crossed the Rocky Mountains by the same route taken by Sir Alexander Mackenzie. On the headwaters of Fraser River, named after him, and on Lake Fraser, he erected the first fur trader's post, on the west side of the Rocky Mountains.

During the same period the most noted trader of Northern Minnesota was a Celt, named Cameron. Numerous incidents remain of his generosity and hospitality. He died in 1811. The spot of his

burial was long sacred to the voyageurs, and was known as "Cameron's grave."

THE PACIFIC FUR TRADERS.

Early in the present century the North-west Fur Company had pushed its trade, as we have mentioned, beyond the Rocky Mountains. Shortly after, in consequence of the celebrated overland journey of the American captains, Lewis and Clarke (1804-6), John Jacob Astor, of New York, undertook to establish a fur company at the mouth of the Columbia River. It is quite surprising to note the number of Celts who were selected in both these companies to carry out the purposes of the traders beyond the mountains. One of the most prominent of Astor's Company was Alexander McKay, figuring so greatly in Washington Irving's "Astoria" and other works of the period. It is said he had accompanied Sir Alexander Mackenzie on both his voyages. The ship "Tonquin," which afterwards met so sad a fate, sailed from New York on Sept. 6th, 1810, under the command of a harsh and blustering American officer, Captain Thorn. From Ross Cox's account we learn that—"Four partners of the Astor enterprise, namely, Messrs. Alexander McKay, Duncan McDougall, David and Robert Stuart, embarked in her, with eight clerks, &c., all destined for the company's establishment at Columbia." Capt. Thorn played the tyrant, "but," continues Cox, "Messrs. McKay, McDougall, and the Stuarts had too much Highland blood in their veins to submit patiently to the haughty and uncivil treatment of the captain." Irving describes,

with graphic effect, the loss of the "Tonquin" by the attack of the savage natives, and we know from other sources how Partner McKay was cruelly put to death:

Another of the Astor fur traders was one well-known afterwards on our own Red River. This was

ALEXANDER ROSS,

the Sheriff of Red River. He was a native of the Highlands, and came to Canada in 1802, having been born in the year 1781. In 1802 three vessels sailed from Fort William, in Scotland, to Quebec, laden with Highlanders. Many of these were McDonnell's Highlanders—a regiment largely of Glengarry men—who had served in repressing the Irish rebellion of 1798. There were among these people colonists from Glenelg and Kintail, and elsewhere in the Highlands. There were some thousands of these settlers. They chiefly settled in Glengarry County, Ontario, and they have given a backbone to that part of Canada at every crisis in its history since their arrival. Among these Celts was Alexander Ross. He taught school in their settlements for a number of years, and at about the age of forty, in 1810, entered Astor's Company. On the transfer of the affairs of the Pacific Fur Company, in 1813, to the Nor'westers, he accepted service in the latter, and was placed in charge of Oakinagau, a post on the western slope of the Rockies. Here he obtained his Indian wife, the daughter of a chief; she died in Winnipeg only a couple of years since. In 1816 Ross was placed in charge of the Nor'west post at Kamloops, but in 1825 he left the fur trade, crossed

the Rocky Mountains, and took up his abode at a spot since included in the City of Winnipeg. He was for a number of years Sheriff of Assiniboine. He wrote a number of books on the country: "Red River Settlement," "The Fur Traders of the Far West," "Adventures on the Oregon and Columbia," and it is said an essay on "Agriculture." Sheriff Ross was a principal mover in obtaining the appointment of the late Rev. Dr. Black, of Kildonan. Two daughters of Sheriff Ross were married to clergymen, Dr. Black, and Rev. George Flett (Indian Missionary). One son of the Ross family—James—took high honours in Toronto University, and was one of the editors of the *Toronto Globe*. Numerous streets of Winnipeg are named after members of the Ross family. Sheriff Ross died in October, 1856.

OTHER NOR'WESTERS.

In addition to the well-known Simon McTavish, leader of the fur traders already mentioned, there was the redoubtable John George McTavish, as also a Donald, an Alexander, and a James McTavish, actively engaged in the fur trade. There was a partner, Angus Bethune, and a trader, McMillan, a courageous man, who maintained himself among the Flatheads, a treacherous tribe on the Pacific. Trader McMillan afterwards became a chief factor of the Hudson's Bay Company, and was put in charge of the great experimental farm begun on the Assiniboine by Sir George Simpson. He did not succeed in farming, however, so well as he had done in the fur trade among the Flatheads. Alexander Stewart,

Alexander Fraser, and Alexander McKenzie were also among the energetic Montreal fur merchants.

A GOOD MARKSMAN.

Another noted Celt on the west coast was a partner, Donald McKenzie. He had been one of the adventurers of the Astor Company, but afterwards joined the Nor'west Company. "He was an experienced trader, and possessed an accurate knowledge of the fur trader's country. He could, with his rifle, drive a dozen balls consecutively, at one hundred paces, through a Spanish dollar, which accomplishment alone was enough to secure him the respect of the Indians. To the most cautious prudence he united the most dauntless intrepidity; in fact, no hardships could fatigue, no dangers intimidate him." Mr. Mackenzie was afterwards Governor of the Red River Colony for eight years (1825-33).

THE GREAT SMALL-POX CHIEF.

Duncan McDougall was one of the four partners mentioned by us as entering the Astor Company. He was a somewhat petulant and selfish Celt, it is said, but was evidently a man of action and decision. We learn, from "Astoria," that when the ill-fated ship "Tonquin" sailed up the coast, McDougall was left in charge of their fort. The massacre of the crew of the "Tonquin" inspired the natives to make an attack on the ill-prepared fort. McDougall had but a handful of whites with him. He adopted a most daring expedient. Knowing the extreme dread of the natives for the small-pox, the trader assembled the chiefs of the neighbouring Indians;

told them he had heard of the treachery of those who had attacked the "Tonquin," and declared he would have vengeance. Raising before them a corked bottle, he said—"The white men among you are few in number, but they are mighty in medicine. I have but to draw the cork of this bottle and the scourge will sweep man, woman, and child from the earth." The chiefs believed him; they implored him not to carry out his threat, and asserted themselves friends of the whites. McDougall kept the vial of his wrath sealed up, and was ever after known as "the great small-pox chief." In the course of time McDougall entered into wedlock with the daughter of Comcomly, the Chinook chief.

MCDONALD "GRAND."

One of the most daring of the Nor'westers who went to the Pacific slope was a partner, John McDonald. He was well-connected in Scotland, and had, with his family, emigrated from Invernessshire to Canada while a lad. His first language was Gaelic, he had learned English, and in Canada, French, while he was a proficient in half-a-dozen Indian dialects. "He was six feet four inches in height, with broad shoulders, large bushy whiskers, and red hair, which he allowed to grow for years without the use of scissors, and which, sometimes falling over his face and shoulders, gave to his countenance a wild and uncouth appearance." On the Pacific coast he married an Indian woman of the Spokane tribe. McDonald was feared as well as loved by the natives. He had a most uncontrollable temper, and in his rage would indulge in a

wild medley of Gaelic, English, French, and Indian objurgations. The name given him, "le grand," was certainly suitable. Another Nor'wester, John McDonald, was known as "le prêtre." This name was given because Mr. McDonald, a rigid Roman Catholic, had insisted on the observance, on the voyage, of the Church fasts by his French-Canadian employés. He retired to the Ottawa, and there spent his declining years. Another Nor'wester, McDonald, was also known as "le bras croché" (crooked arm). This habit of giving soubriquets was not uncommon in the North-west, as, indeed, it seems to be customary in all Highland communities, where many of the same name are found. Of the Nor'west Mackenzies, for example, there were four well-known—"le rouge," "le blanc," "le borgne" (one-eyed), and "le picoté" (pitted or marked).

A BRAVE MACKAY.

Another man distinguished, even among the better-known Nor'westers, was Colonel William Mackay. He came west to trade about 1793, along the rivers tributary to the Mississippi. He was a brother of the unfortunate Alexander Mackay, already mentioned, killed in the attack on the "Tonquin." After much wandering he took up his position at the great trading post of Michilimackinac. When the war of 1812-15 came on between Canada and the United States, he entered heartily into it, led the voyageurs, and distinguished himself in the battle of Lacolle Mill, on the St. Lawrence. During the war Mackay is said to have traversed the whole country lying north of Lake

Huron, and to have travelled nineteen thousand miles. As Major of the Michigan Fencibles, he co-operated with Colonel Macdouall in the bloodless capture of Prairie du Chien. On this expedition Col. Macdouall, a Celt, held Michilimackinac; Major Mackay, who, for his success on this occasion, was made Colonel, commanded the mixed party of whites and Indians; while another Highlander, Lieutenant Duncan Graham, had the immediate leadership of the Sioux and Chippewas, those staunch friends of the British. Colonel Mackay married from the family of Judge Davidson, of Montreal, and on retiring from the fur trade became Indian Superintendent, and spent his last days in Montreal, dying of cholera in 1832. Judge Mackay, of Montreal, is one of his sons.

A CELTIC COLONY.

It is an oft-told tale, the coming of the expatriated Sutherlandshire crofters, under the patronage of Lord Selkirk, to the banks of the Red River. The enterprising colonizer, Lord Selkirk, was not a Celt. But while a student at College in Edinburgh he had, in common with his friend, Walter Scott, formed a passionate attachment for Highland life and customs, and for the Celtic race. In 1792 he had undertaken a tour through the Highlands; he was able to speak the Gaelic language, and for his benefactions to the Celtic race, he deserves adoption or affiliation at their hands. Of that forced emigration, from 1811-15, we may not now speak at length. In the presence of their burning homes, all the Celtic attachment to their native glens burnt forth more fiercely; driven from their native shores,

they went forth with a calm despair somewhat akin to the desolate determination with which the Israeliteish captives went forth to Babylon; burnt into their hearts, the recollection of the "Highland clearances" of the first quarter of this century blazes forth in the memory of tens of thousands of Celtic settlers all over America, and the wrong is treasured up in their bosoms, and remembered as only a Highlander can remember.

The inhospitable shores of Hudson's Bay; the iron-coast in winter; men and women trudging over the ice and snow with bleeding feet; the starving wives and children; the wearying journey of six hundred miles from the Bay to Red River; and the arrival at a destination houseless and without sufficient food. These, and the subsequent hardships, are but the successive scenes of the gloomy panorama of the early Selkirk settlement. Sutherlands and McKinnons, McKays and Coopers, McLeods and Smiths, McPhersons and McLeans, Mathesons and McEacherns, McBeths and Frasers, Macdonalds and Campbells, Livingstones and Polsons, Bannermans and Gunns, Munroes and McIvors, were the components of this Celtic movement; for, though a few of the names given are Norse, yet these families had all intermarried with the Celts. Something less than three hundred was the number of the four bands who, in four successive years, proved the Hudson's Bay route feasible.

A CELTIC FEUD.

No Greek can meet Greek with more spirit in deadly conflict than Celt meets Celt. Lord Selkirk's

Colony was in charge of Celtic officers, and they found in the Nor'wester traders "foemen worthy of their steel." It matters not for our present purpose who made the onset. There are two sides to this question. Miles Macdonell, one of the Glengarry men, who had been a captain in the Queen's Rangers, was in charge of the Selkirk Colony, and seems to have been in Niagara in 1798, where he was married; and in 1808 was Sheriff in York. The Nor'westers looked with jealousy on an agricultural settlement in the fur traders' country. Governor Macdonell made a proclamation forbidding the export of pemican, and seized a portion of the stock at one of the Nor'west forts. This he did to provide food for the settlers, and he offered payment in full for the quantity seized. The Nor'westers resented the seizure. In 1814 the partners of the Nor'westers met at Fort William, and determined on reprisals. They appointed two Celts to proceed to Fort Gibraltar, their fort, within the present site of Winnipeg. These were

DUNCAN CAMERON

and Alexander Macdonell. Of these, Cameron was the more noted. He was crafty and determined. He lived at Fort Gibraltar with a considerable state. He wore a captain's uniform—a red coat, and a formidable-looking sword. He signed himself Captain Commanding, Voyageur Corps. He seemed a man of much importance to the Indians. To the Selkirk Colonists he devoted his attention. Speaking, as he did, their own Gaelic tongue, he reached the hearts of many of them. He fared sumptuously every

day. The colonists, none too well provided with food, were welcome at his hospitable table; and in the spring of 1815 the skilful diplomatist, with true Celtic warmth, provided three-fourths of the colonists with farms in Western Ontario, on Government land, and gave them free transport down the canoe route to their new home. Blood proved, to these Highlanders, thicker than water. The remaining colonists, reinforced by new arrivals from Britain, had another Celt, an officer of Lord Selkirk, to whom they were much indebted. This was Colin Robertson, who afterwards became a Chief Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company. In 1816 the Nor'-westers success of the previous year induced still greater exertions, and now the Bois-brûles, or French half-breeds, with their Celtic leaders, came sweeping down from the west to destroy the colony. They were led by a Scoto-French half-breed, Cuthbert Grant. This man, who had command of the party which killed Governor Semple, was, on the whole, humane. He had much influence among half-breeds and Indians. He was a stout, and yet energetic man, who rose to a prominent position in late years. His home was at White Horse Plains, twenty miles or so west of Winnipeg. When the Council of Assiniboia was organized in 1835 he was made a member of it, and bore the high-sounding, but somewhat vague, title of "Warden of the Plains." This was probably a reference to a leadership among the plain hunters, who chased the buffalo. For the better carrying out of the hunt certain rules were needed, and Cuthbert Grant was seemingly a judge and leader among the wild spirits

indicted
by the
Grand Jury
at York
U.C. in
1818
for the
murder
of
Gov. Semple

of the Prairies. His children and grand-children are well-known to the old settlers of Red River.

AN IRISH CELT.

But few of the Irish Celts have made the Northwest their home. They do not seem, as a class, to have taken hold of the fur trade, and few of them have come as settlers to this country. It is well that we are able to find one who stands out so prominently, and for so long a period in the affairs of Red River, as Andrew McDermott. He was born in the Green Isle in the year 1791, and embarked at Sligo in the first ship of Selkirk Colonists in 1811. He is said to have been so Celtic as to have been able to trace his lineage back to the celebrated Dermot McMurrrough, the Leinster Chieftain. In the service of the company he was active and pushing. He became more familiar with the use and structure of the Indian language than even the Indians themselves. We are told that he was "an excellent walker, ran like a deer, and could endure cold with any Eskimo dog." Leaving the Hudson's Bay Company in 1824, he made his first adventure as a "free trader." He became an extensive merchant, and was on good terms with everybody. His business was multifarious. "He could lend a horse, change an ox, or barter a sleigh dog, as circumstances required." He gradually obtained control of the main freighting business of the country. When the Canadian immigration set in, the Celtic trader was ready for the change, and lent a helping-hand to many a new comer in beginning business in the then little village of Winnipeg.

Mr. McDermott had, in 1835, become one of the Council of Assiniboia, and was a favourite with the Governor as with the people. He possessed a large fund of information about the early settlement and condition of Red River, and was somewhat given to venturing on that very uncertain task of foretelling the weather and the seasons. In 1881 the portly form of the Celtic merchant, who had reached the age of ninety, and had actually spent three-score and ten years, save one, in business on Red River, passed forever from our view.

A CELTIC EMPEROR.

One of the most striking figures in Montreal society, forty years ago, was the bustling, short-statured, rather domineering, man, Governor Simpson, of the Hudson's Bay Company. A native of "the land of the mountain and the flood," he first saw its heather hills in 1796. Like so many Scotchmen, he had gone to London to seek his fortune. A successful clerk in a counting-house in the capital, he came out to Canada at the instance of London fur traders, to complete, if possible, a reconciliation between the Nor'westers and Hudson's Bay Company, who, by their feuds—on which we have shortly touched—had both succeeded in bringing themselves to the verge of bankruptcy. The young commissioner was a born diplomat. McLean, in the second volume of his "Twenty-five Years' Service in the H. B. Territory," has given an account of the means adopted by the young officer in 1821 to effect the coalition, and organize the new company. Difficulties begirt the new Governor on every side.

Red River affairs were in confusion ; the fur trade was demoralized ; the partners were quarrelsome ; and nothing but an iron will and consummate skill could bring order out of such a chaos. But it was done, and the word of the Governor was felt as powerfully in far-distant Mackenzie River as the Czar of Russia's commands in any part of his empire. Forty canoe journeys up the lakes, and by the Grande Portage, are said to have been performed by the little Emperor. His canoe was the best, his men the most athletic, and his speed in excess of that of any travellers by the canoe route. Leaving Liverpool in March of the year 1841, he sailed to Boston, came up the lakes, crossed the Rockies, reached San Francisco, sailed to the Sandwich Islands, then N. E. to Sitka, in Russian-America, across to Siberia, passed by the overland route through Siberia and Russia, and reached London October, 1842. Sir George was likewise a friend of exploration, and did much to assist travellers on their way through the country. He approved the expedition which tracked the coast of the Arctic Ocean from the Mackenzie River to Point Barrow, and from the Coppermine to the Gulf of Boothia, in 1836-39. It is stated that it was for this successful work that he received the mark of knighthood, although the task was planned and performed by Thomas Simpson, Sir George's relative, and the explorer Dease. Many incidents are met with all through the Territories, in the mouths of the old residents, of the impulsive, energetic little Governor during his career of well-nigh forty years. He died near Montreal in 1860.

Closely associated with the Hudson's Bay Company magnate, just described, is the career of his kinsman, already named,

THOMAS SIMPSON,

noted in the records of exploration. This discoverer was born at Dingwall, Ross-shire, July 2nd, 1808, the son of a magistrate of the county. Intended for the church, young Simpson, at the age of seventeen, entered King's College, Aberdeen. At the close of his academic career he carried off the "Huttonian" prize, a high distinction, and received his Master of Arts degree. He gave up the intention of studying for the ministry in 1829, having taken one year in the study of theology, and on the invitation of Governor Simpson, entered the Hudson's Bay Company service. As second in command, his senior officer being Peter Warren Dease, an experienced officer of the Hudson's Bay Company, Thomas Simpson explored the coast of the Arctic Ocean. He completed the survey between Mackenzie River and Point Barrow, explored the "barren grounds" between Great Slave and the Coppermine River, and in 1838 performed a remarkable pedestrian journey along the sea-coast. In 1840 Simpson left the service of the Company. He left Fort Garry in company with a band of half-breeds to cross the plains of Minnesota, and his death is one of the most melancholy episodes of Northwestern exploration. On 13th or 14th of June, Simpson shot two of his companions, and whether this was an act of insanity, or was done in self-defence in a quarrel, cannot be determined. His

body was brought back to the Red River settlement, and is buried in the St. John's churchyard, in the City of Winnipeg. The British Government, in the very month of his death, intimated its intention of bestowing upon him, for life, a pension of £100 per annum, and the Royal Geographical Society presented him their gold medal in 1839, which, however, never reached him.

During the forty years of Sir George Simpson's regime, many Celts rose to prominence in connection with the fur trade or exploration. Shortly after the flood on the Red River, in 1826, by which a number of cattle were destroyed, a considerable French trader, Joseph Rolette, living at Prairie du Chien, on the Mississippi, sent in a large herd of cattle for sale in the settlement. For the management of this enterprise a Celt was at hand. This was Duncan Campbell, a most agile and enduring traveller. So ubiquitous was he among the settlements of the west, that he was commonly known as the "Wandering Jew." Another most indefatigable explorer, who was for many years in the Hudson's Bay Company service, and well-known to us, is Chief Factor Robert Campbell, now of Strathclair, in this Province. He was a favourite of Governor Simpson, who was fond of his officers who were not deterred by hardships. The retired officer has frequently recounted to the writer the details of his journeys. With but few supplies, trader Campbell wandered off to the country west of the Rockies from the Mackenzie River. To Chief Factor Campbell belongs the honour of really discovering the Yukon River. He erected the fort now marked

on the maps of the region near Alaska as Selkirk Fort, which was long known as Campbell's Fort, and would have remained so but for the modesty of the founder. Another officer worthy of notice in this same region, and during this period, is Chief Trader Murray, from whom Sir John Richardson obtains so much information about the Yukon country, and who retired to the banks of Red River to spend his last days. Time fails to tell of more than the names of Celtic Hudson's Bay officers, such as Roderick Ross Macfarlane, Ross, Mackenzie, Matheson, Macdonald, McIntyre, McTavish, and many others who have, in later Hudson's Bay Company times, worthily sustained the fame of the Celts—a fame unapproached by any other class in the history of the fur trade and exploration.

RECENT CELTS.

The immigration to the North-west in the last fifteen or twenty years has had a very large Celtic strain in it as well. We have had nothing to do in this paper with the Lowland or Orkney elements, so large and powerful a part of the Scottish people, nor of the Irish people of English or Lowland descent. Recent immigration has had a large proportion of its strength from these sources. It could not have happened, however, that so large an influx of people from the Counties of Huron, Bruce, and Perth, in Ontario, from Central Canada, from Nova Scotia, Cape Breton, and Prince Edward Island, and from Scotland itself, could have taken place without many Celts being included. I can but call your attention to a point or two, and then leave the matter.

In these later years have come to us, among others, many Scottish and Irish Celts. They are strong among the clergy of all the churches, and, no doubt, the fervour of the Celtic nature has something to do with this fact:—Machray and McRae, McLean, Gordon, Mackay, McKellar, Mackenzie, Matheson, O'Meara, Farquharson, McLaren, McFarlane, Munroe, Robertson, Cameron, Ross, Campbell, McWilliam, Urquhart, Sutherland, and many others whose Celtic origin is masked by their bearing Norse and Saxon names.

The lawyers and doctors have McDonalds, McLeans, McBeth, Macarthur, Sutherland, Fisher, Mackenzie, Bain, and Archibald, O'Donnell, Ferguson, Dawson, and McDiarmid, all of whom have, I presume, Celtic blood in their veins.

The bankers and business men have an endless round of Highland names among them. These are: McKeand, Macarthur, Mackenzie, Murchison, McIntyre, McKilligan, McNee, McNab, McFarlane, Macdonald, McPherson, McMicken, McLellan, McBain, Alexander, McColl, McVicar, McCharles, McNeil, McCrossan, McKercher, McCracken, McCreary, Campbell, McDougall, McKechnie; while the farmers include all these names, and many more, as Grant, Fraser, McFayden, Mawhinney, McGurn, Cameron, McCabe, McKay, McOuat, McAlpine, McEwen, McIntosh, McQuarrie, McCausland, Calder, &c., &c., McQueen, McCorquodale, Shaw.

CONCLUSION.

Our City Council has a considerable Celtic element, and this may account for its thrift; while,

in building up our new Canadian nation, we welcome, with equal warmth, Celt and Saxon, Teuton and Frenchman, to our broad prairies.

