

yearly increasing numbers resorted as to a shrine of genius purely American. Mr. Tappan, owner of the place, had the good taste as well as the kindly remembrances to keep the study in the same state that Hawthorne left it in.

CONCORD, MASS., Oct. 18, 1852.

DEAR BRIDGE,—I received your letter some time ago, and ought to have answered it long since, but you know my habits of epistolary delinquency, so I make no apology. Besides, I have been busy with literary labor of more

kinds than one. Perhaps you have seen *Blithedale* before this time. I doubt whether you will like it very well; but it has met with good success, and has brought me, besides its American circulation, a thousand dollars from England; whence, likewise, have come many favorable notices. Just at this time I rather think your friend stands foremost there as an American fiction-monger.

In a day or two I intend to begin a new romance, which, if possible, I mean to make more genial than the last...

Yours truly,

NATH HAWTHORNE.

"A SKIN FOR A SKIN."

BY JULIAN RALPH.

THOSE who go to the newer parts of Canada to-day will find that several of those places which their school geographies displayed as Hudson Bay posts a few years ago are now towns and cities. In them they will find the trading stations of old now transformed into general stores. Alongside of the head offices of the great corporation, where used to stand the walls of Fort Garry, they will see the principal store of the city of Winnipeg, an institution worthy of any city, and more nearly to be likened to Whiteley's Necessary Store in London than to any shopping-place in New York. As in Whiteley's you may buy a house, or anything belonging in or around a house, so you may in this great Manitoban establishment. The great retail emporium of Victoria, the capital of British Columbia, is the Hudson Bay store; and in Calgary, the metropolis of Alberta and the Canadian plains, the principal shopping-place in a territory beside which Texas dwindles to the proportions of a park is the Hudson Bay store.

These and many other shops indicate a new development of the business of the last of England's great chartered monopolies, but instead of marking the manner in which civilization has forced it to abandon its original function, this merely demonstrates that the proprietors have taken advantage of new conditions while still pursuing their original trade. It is true that the huge corporation is becoming a great retail shop-keeping company. It is also true that by the surrender of its monopolistic privileges it got a consolation prize of money and of twenty millions of dollars' worth of land, so that its

chief business may yet become that of developing and selling real estate. But to-day it is still, as it was two centuries ago, the greatest of fur-trading corporations, and fur-trading is to-day a principal source of its profits.

Reminders of their old associations as forts still confront the visitor to the modern city shops of the company. The great shop in Victoria, for instance, which, as a fort, was the hub around which grew the wheel that is now the capital of the province, has its fur trade conducted in a sort of barn-like annex of the bazar; but there it is, nevertheless, and busy among the great heaps of furs are men who can remember when the Hydahs and the Tlinkets and the other neighboring tribes came down in their war canoes to trade their winter's catch of skins for guns and beads, vermilion, blankets, and the rest. Now this is the mere catch-all for the furs got at posts farther up the coast and in the interior. But upstairs, above the store, where the fashionable ladies are looking over laces and purchasing perfumes, you will see a collection of queer old guns of a pattern familiar to Daniel Boone. They are relics of the fur company's stock of those famous "trade guns" which disappeared long before they had cleared the plains of buffalo, and which the Indians used to deck with brass nails and bright paint, and value as no man to-day values a watch. But close to the trade guns of romantic memory is something yet more highly suggestive of the company's former position. This is a heap of unclaimed trunks, "left," the employés will tell you, "by travellers, hunters, and explor-

ers who never came back to inquire for them."

It was not long ago that conditions existed such as in that region rendered the disappearance of a traveller more than a possibility. The wretched, squat, bow-legged, dirty laborers of that coast, who now dress as we do, and earn good wages in the salmon-fishing and canning industries, were not long ago very numerous, and still more villanous. They were not to be compared with the plains Indians as warriors or as men, but they were more treacherous, and wanting in high qualities. In the interior to-day are some Indians such as they were who are accused of cannibalism, and who have necessitated warlike defences at distant trading-posts. Travellers who escaped Indian treachery risked starvation, and stood their chances of losing their reckoning, of freezing to death, of encounters with grizzlies, of snow-slides, of canoe accidents in rapids, and of all the other casualties of life in a territory which to-day is not half explored. Those are not the trunks of Hudson Bay men, for such would have been sent home to English and Scottish mourners; they are the luggage of chance men who happened along, and outfitted at the old post before going farther. But the company's men were there before them, had penetrated the region farther and earlier, and there they are to-day, carrying on the fur trade under conditions strongly resembling those their predecessors once encountered at posts that are now towns in farming regions, and where now the locomotive and the steamer are familiar vehicles. Moreover, the status of the company in British Columbia is its status all the way across the North from the Pacific to the Atlantic.

To me the most interesting and picturesque life to be found in North America, at least north of Mexico, is that which is occasioned by this principal phase of the company's operations. In and around the fur trade is found the most notable relic of the white man's earliest life on this continent. Our wild life in this country is, happily, gone. The frontiersman is more difficult to find than the frontier, the cowboy has become a laborer almost like any other, our Indians are as the animals in our parks, and there is little of our country that is not threaded by railroads or wagonways. But in new or western Canada

this is not so. A vast extent of it north of the Canadian Pacific Railway, which hugs our border, has been explored only as to its waterways, its valleys, or its open plains, and where it has been traversed much of it remains as Nature and her near of kin, the red men, had it of old. On the streams canoes are the vehicles of travel and of commerce; in the forests "trails" lead from trading-post to trading-post, the people are Indians, half-breeds, and Esquimaux, who live by hunting and fishing as their forebears did; the Hudson Bay posts are the seats of white population; the post factors are the magistrates.

All this is changing with a rapidity which history will liken to the sliding of scenes before the lens of a magic-lantern. Miners are crushing the foot-hills on either side of the Rocky Mountains, farmers and cattle-men have advanced far northward on the prairie and on the plains in narrow lines, and railroads are pushing hither and thither. Soon the limits of the inhospitable zone this side of the Arctic Sea, and of the marshy weakly wooded country on either side of Hudson Bay, will circumscribe the fur-trader's field, except in so far as there may remain equally permanent hunting-grounds in Labrador and in the mountains of British Columbia. Therefore now, when the Hudson Bay Company is laying the foundations of widely different interests, is the time for halting the old original view that stood in the stereopticon for centuries, that we may see what it revealed, and will still show far longer than it takes for us to view it.

The Hudson Bay Company's agents were not the first hunters and fur-traders in British America, ancient as was their foundation. The French, from the Canadas, preceded them no one knows how many years, though it is said that it was as early as 1627 that Louis XIII. chartered a company of the same sort and for the same aims as the English company. What ever came of that corporation I do not know, but by the time the Englishmen established themselves on Hudson Bay, individual Frenchmen and half-breeds had penetrated the country still farther west. They were of hardy, adventurous stock, and they loved the free roving life of the trapper and hunter. Fitted out by the merchants of Canada, they would pursue the waterways which

there cut up the wilderness in every direction, their canoes laden with goods to tempt the savages, and their guns or traps forming part of their burden. They would be gone the greater part of a year, and always returned with a store of furs to be converted into money, which was, in turn, dissipated in the cities with devil-may-care jollity. These were the *courriers du bois*, and theirs was the stock from which came the *voyageurs* of the next era, and the half-breeds, who joined the service of the rival fur companies, and who, by-the-way, reddened the history of the Northwest territories with the little bloodshed that mars it.

Charles II. of England was made to believe that wonders in the way of discovery and trade would result from a grant of the Hudson Bay territory to certain friends and petitioners. An experimental voyage was made with good results in 1668, and in 1672 the king granted the charter to what he styled "the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay, one body corporate and politique, in deed and in name, really and fully forever, for Us, Our heirs, and Successors." It was indeed a royal and a wholesale charter, for the king declared, "We have given, granted, and confirmed unto said Governor and Company sole trade and commerce of those Seas, Streights, Bays, Rivers, Lakes, Creeks, and Sounds, in whatsoever latitude they shall be, that lie within the entrance of the Streights commonly called Hudson's, together with all the Lands, Countries, and Territories upon the coasts and confines of the Seas, etc., . . . not already actually possessed by or granted to any of our subjects, or possessed by the subjects of any other Christian Prince or State, with the fishing of all sorts of Fish, Whales, Sturgeons, and all other Royal Fishes, . . . together with the Royalty of the Sea upon the Coasts within the limits aforesaid, and all Mines Royal, as well discovered as not discovered, of Gold, Silver, Gems, and Precious Stones, . . . and that the said lands be henceforth reckoned and reputed as one of Our Plantations or Colonies in America called Rupert's Land." For this gift of an empire the corporation was to pay yearly to the king, his heirs and successors, two elks and two black beavers whenever and as often as he, his heirs, or his successors "shall happen to enter

into the said countries." The company was empowered to man ships of war, to create an armed force for security and defence, to make peace or war with any people that were not Christians, and to seize any British or other subject who traded in their territory. The king named his cousin, Prince Rupert, Duke of Cumberland, to be first governor, and it was in his honor that the new territory got its name of Rupert's Land.

In the company were the Duke of Albemarle, Earl Craven, Lords Arlington and Ashley, and several knights and baronets, Sir Philip Carteret among them. There were also five esquires, or gentlemen, and John Portman, "citizen and goldsmith." They adopted the witty sentence, "*Pro pelle cutem*" (A skin for a skin), as their motto, and established as their coat of arms a fox sejant as the crest, and a shield showing four beavers in the quarters, and the cross of St. George, the whole upheld by two stags.

The "adventurers" quickly established forts on the shores of Hudson Bay, and began trading with the Indians, with such success that it was rumored they made from twenty-five to fifty per cent. profit every year. But they exhibited all of that timidity which capital is ever said to possess. They were nothing like as enterprising as the French *courriers du bois*. In a hundred years they were no deeper in the country than at first, excepting as they extended their little system of forts or "factories" up and down and on either side of Hudson and James bays. In view of their profits, perhaps this lack of enterprise is not to be wondered at. On the other hand, their charter was given as a reward for the efforts they had made, and were to make, to find "the Northwest passage to the Southern seas." In this quest they made less of a trial than in the getting of furs; how much less we shall see. But the company had no lack of brave and hardy followers. At first the officers and men at the factories were nearly all from the Orkney Islands, and those islands remained until recent times the recruiting-source for this service. This was because the Orkney men were inured to a rigorous climate, and to a diet largely composed of fish. They were subject to less of a change in the company's service than must have been endured by men from almost any part of England.

I am going, later, to ask the reader to visit Rupert's Land when the company had shaken off its timidity, overcome its obstacles, and dotted all British America with its posts and forts. Then we shall see the interiors of the forts, view the strange yet not always hard or uncouth life of the company's factors and clerks, and glance along the trails and water-courses, mainly unchanged to-day, to note the work and surroundings of the Indians, the *voyageurs*, and the rest who inhabit that region. But, fortunately, I can first show, at least roughly, much that is interesting about the company's growth and methods a century and a half ago. The information is gotten from some English Parliamentary papers forming a report of a committee of the House of Commons in 1749.

Arthur Dobbs and others petitioned Parliament to give them either the rights of the Hudson Bay Company or a similar charter. It seems that England had offered £20,000 reward to whosoever should find the bothersome passage to the Southern seas *viâ* the North Pole, and that these petitioners had sent out two ships for that purpose. They said that when others had done no more than this in Charles II.'s time, that monarch had given them "the greatest privileges as lords proprietors" of the Hudson Bay territory, and that those recipients of royal favor were bounden to attempt the discovery of the desired passage. Instead of this, they not only failed to search effectually or in earnest for the passage, but they had rather endeavored to conceal the same, and to obstruct the discovery thereof by others. They had not possessed or occupied any of the lands granted to them, or extended their trade, or made any plantations or settlements, or permitted other British subjects to plant, settle, or trade there. They had established only four factories and one small trading-house; yet they had connived at or allowed the French to encroach, settle, and trade within their limits, to the great detriment and loss of Great Britain. The petitioners argued that the Hudson Bay charter was monopolistic, and therefore void, and at any rate it had been forfeited "by non-user or abuser."

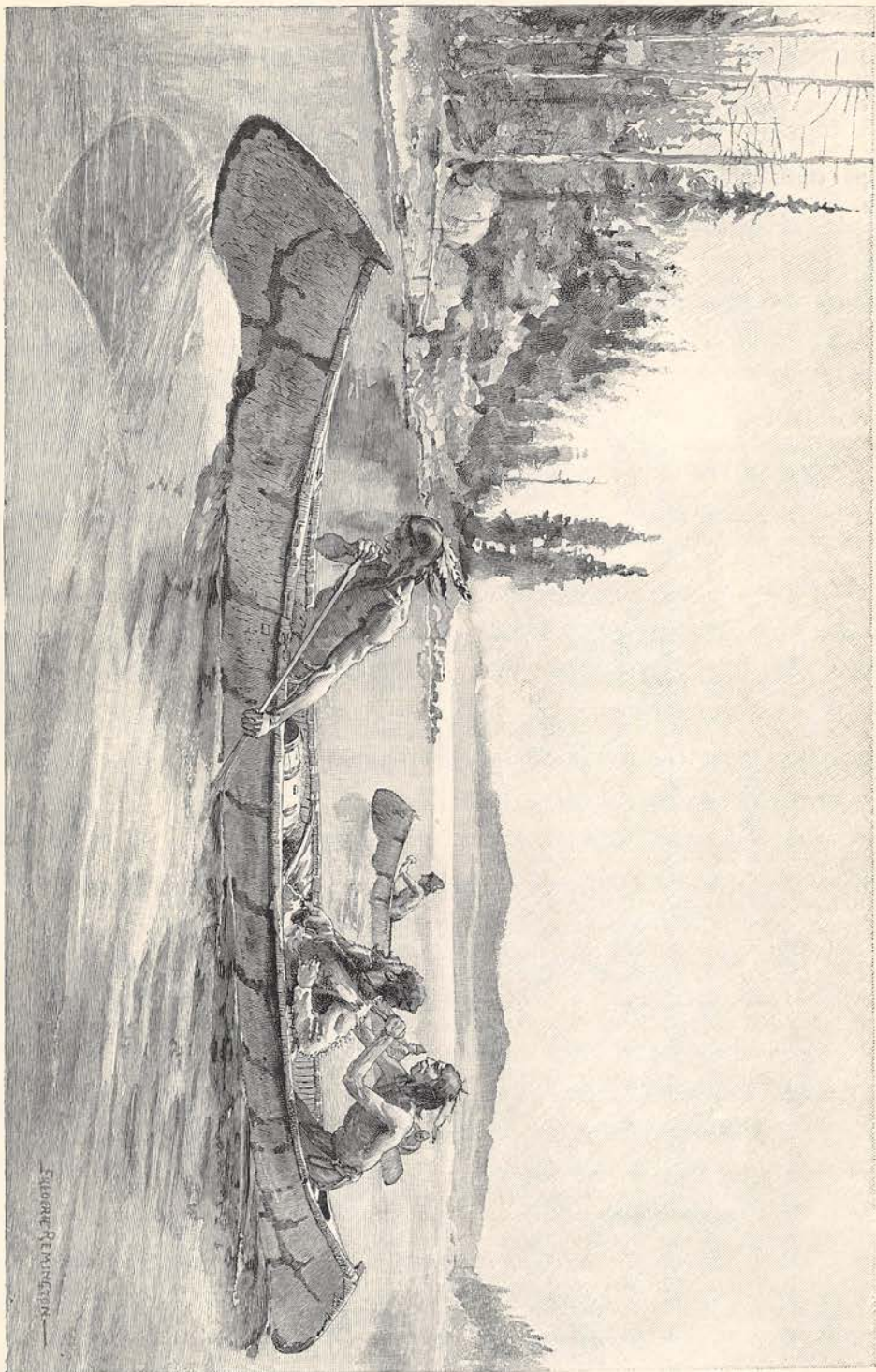
In the course of the hearing upon both sides, the "voyages upon discovery," according to the company's own showing,

were not undertaken until the corporation had been in existence nearly fifty years, and then the search had only been prosecuted during eighteen years, and with only ten expeditions. Two ships sent out from England never reached the bay, but those which succeeded, and were then ready for adventurous cruising, made exploratory voyages that lasted only between one month and ten weeks, so that, as we are accustomed to judge such expeditions, they seem farcical and mere pretences. Yet their largest ship was only of 190 tons burden, and the others were a third smaller—vessels like our small coasting schooners. The most particular instructions to the captains were to trade with all natives, and persuade them to kill whales, sea-horses, and seals; and, subordinately and incidentally, "by God's permission," to find out the Strait of Annian, a fanciful sheet of water, with tales of which that irresponsible Greek sea-tramp, Juan de Fuca, had disturbed all Christendom, saying that it led between a great island in the Pacific (Vancouver) and the mainland into the inland lakes. To the factors at their forts the company sent such lukewarm messages as, "and if you can by any means find out any discovery or matter to the northward or elsewhere in the company's interest or advantage, do not fail to let us know every year."

The attitude of the company toward discovery suggests a Dogberry at its head, bidding his servants to "comprehend" the Northwest passage, but should they fail, to thank God they were rid of a villain. In truth, they were traders pure and simple, and were making great profits with little trouble and expense.

They brought from England about £4000 worth of powder, shot, guns, fire-steels, flints, gun-worms, powder-horns, pistols, hatchets, sword blades, awl blades, ice-chisels, files, kettles, fish-hooks, net lines, burning-glasses, looking-glasses, tobacco, brandy, goggles, gloves, hats, lace, needles, thread, thimbles, breeches, vermilion, worsted sashes, blankets, flannels, red feathers, buttons, beads, and "shirts, shoes, and stockens." They spent, in keeping up their posts and ships, about £15,000, and in return they brought to England castorum, whale fins, whale oil, deer horns, goose quills, bed feathers, and skins—in all of a value of about £26,000 per annum. I have taken the average

RIVAL TRADERS RACING TO THE INDIAN CAMP.



for several years in that period of the company's history, and it is in our money as if they spent \$90,000 and got back \$130,000, and this is their own showing under such circumstances as to make it the course of wisdom not to boast of their profits. They had three times trebled their stock and otherwise increased it, so that having been 10,500 shares at the outset, it was now 103,950 shares.

And now that we have seen how natural it was that they should not then bother with exploration and discovery, in view of the remuneration that came for simply sitting in their forts and buying furs, let me pause to repeat what one of their wisest men said casually, between the whiffs of a meditative cigar, last summer: "The search for the north pole must soon be taken up in earnest," said he. "Man has paused in the undertaking because other fields where his needs were more pressing, and where effort was more certain to be rewarded with success, had been neglected. This is no longer the fact, and geographers and other students of the subject all agree that the north pole must next be sought and found. Speaking only on my own account and from my knowledge, I assert that whenever any government is in earnest in this desire, it will employ the men of this fur service, and they will find the pole. The company has posts far within the arctic circle, and they are manned by men peculiarly and exactly fitted for the adventure. They are hardy, acutely intelligent, self-reliant, accustomed to the climate, and all that it engenders and demands. They are on the spot ready to start at the earliest moment in the season, and they have with them all that they will need on the expedition. They would do nothing hurriedly or rashly; they would know what they were about as no other white men would—and they would get there."

I mention this not merely for the novelty of the suggestion and the interest it may excite, but because it contributes to the reader's understanding of the scope and character of the work of the company. It is not merely Western and among Indians, it is hyperborean and among Esquimaux. But would it not be passing strange if, beyond all that England has gained from the careless gift of an empire to a few favorites by Charles II., she should yet possess the honor and

glory of a grand discovery due to the natural results of that action?

To return to the Parliamentary inquiry into the company's affairs one hundred and forty years ago. If it served no other purpose, it drew for us of this day an outline picture of the first forts and their inmates and customs. Being printed in the form our language took in that day, when a gun was a "musquet" and a stockade was a "palisadoe," we fancy we can see the bumptious governors—as they then called the factors or agents—swelling about in knee-breeches and cocked hats and colored waistcoats, and relying, through their fear of the savages, upon the little putty-pipe cannon that they speak of as "swivels." These were ostentatiously planted before their quarters, and in front of these again were massive double doors, such as we still make of steel for our bank safes, but, when made of wood, use only for our refrigerators. The views we get of the company's "servants"—which is to say, mechanics and laborers—are all of trembling varlets, and the testimony is full of hints of petty sharp practice toward the red man, suggestive of the artful ways of our own Hollanders, who bought beaver-skins by the weight of their feet, and then pressed down upon the scales with all their might.

The witnesses had mainly been at one time in the employ of the company, and they made the point against it that it imported all its bread (*i. e.*, grain) from England, and neither encouraged planting nor cultivated the soil for itself. But there were several who said that even in August they found the soil still frozen at a depth of two and a half or three feet. Not a man in the service was allowed to trade with the natives outside the forts, or even to speak with them. One fellow was put in irons for going into an Indian's tent; and there was a witness who had "heard a Governor say he would whip a Man without Tryal; and that the severest Punishment is a Dozen of Lashes." Of course there was no instructing the savages in either English or the Christian religion; and we read that, though there were twenty-eight Europeans in one factory, "witness never heard Sermon or Prayers there, nor ever heard of any such Thing either before his Time or since." Hunters who offered their services got one-half what they shot or trapped, and the captains of vessels kept in the bay



THE BEAR-TRAP.

were allowed "25 *l. per cent.*" for all the whalebone they got.

One witness said: "The method of trade is by a standard set by the Governors. They never lower it, but often double it, so that where the Standard directs 1 Skin to be taken they generally take Two." Another said he "had been ordered to shorten the measure for Powder, which ought to be a Pound, and that within these 10 Years had been reduced an Ounce or Two." "The Indians made a Noise sometimes, and the Company gave them their Furs again." A bookkeeper lately in the service said that the company's measures for powder were short, and yet even such measures were not filled above half full. Profits thus made were distinguished as "the overplus trade," and signified what skins were got more than were paid for, but he could not say whether such gains went to the company or to the governor. (As a matter of fact, the factors or governors shared

in the company's profits, and were interested in swelling them in every way they could.)

There was much news of how the French traders got the small furs of martens, foxes, and cats, by intercepting the Indians, and leaving them to carry only the coarse furs to the company's forts. A witness "had seen the Indians come down in fine *French* cloaths, with as much Lace as he ever saw upon any Cloaths whatsoever. He believed if the Company would give as much for the Furs as the *French*, the *Indians* would bring them down;" but the French asked only thirty marten-skins for a gun, whereas the company's standard was from thirty-six to forty such skins. Then, again, the company's plan (unchanged to-day) was to take the Indian's furs, and then, being possessed of them, to begin the barter.

This shouldering the common grief upon the French was not merely the result of the chronic English antipathy to

their ancient and their lively foes. The French were swarming all around the outer limits of the company's field, taking first choice of the furs, and even beginning to set up posts of their own. Canada was French soil, and peopled by as hardy and adventurous a class as inhabited any part of America. The *courriers du bois* and the *bois-brûlés* (half-breeds), whose success afterward led to the formation of rival companies, had begun a mosquito warfare, by canoeing the waters that led to Hudson Bay, and had penetrated 1000 miles farther west than the English. One Thomas Barnett, a smith, said that the French intercepted the Indians, forcing them to trade, "when they take what they please, giving them Toys in Exchange; and fright them into Compliance by Tricks of Sleight of Hand; from whence the *Indians* conclude them to be Conjurers; and if the *French* did not compel the *Indians* to trade, they would certainly bring all the Goods to the *English*."

This must have seemed to the direct, practical English trading mind a wretched business, and worthy only of Johnny Crapeau, to worst the noble Briton by monkeyish acts of conjuring. It stirred the soul of one witness, who said that the way to meet it was "by sending some *English* with a little Brandy." A gallon to certain chiefs and a gallon and a half to others would certainly induce the natives to come down and trade, he thought.

But while the testimony of the English was valuable as far as it went, which was mainly concerning trade, it was as nothing regarding the life of the natives compared with that of one Joseph La France, of Missili-Mackinack (Mackinaw), a traveller, hunter, and trader. He had been sent as a child to Quebec to learn French, and in later years had been from Lake Nipissing to Lake Champlain and the Great Lakes, the Mississippi, the Missouri, the Ouinipigue (Winnipeg) or Red River, and to Hudson Bay. He told his tales to Arthur Dobbs, who made a book of them, and part of that became an appendix to the committee's report. La France said:

"That the high price on *European* Goods discourages the Natives so much, that if it were not that they are under a Necessity of having Guns, Powder, Shot, Hatchets, and other Iron Tools for their Hunting, and Tobacco, Brandy, and some Paint for Luxury, they would not go

down to the Factory with what they now carry. They leave great numbers of Furs and Skins behind them. A good Hunter among the *Indians* can kill 600 Beavers in a season, and carry down but 100" (because their canoes were small); "the rest he uses at home, or hangs them upon Branches of Trees upon the Death of their Children, as an Offering to them; or use them for Bedding and Coverings: they sometimes burn off the Fur, and roast the Beavers, like Pigs, upon any Entertainments; and they often let them rot, having no further Use of them. The Beavers, he says, are of Three Colours—the Brown-reddish Colour, the Black, and the White. The Black is most valued by the Company, and in *England*; the White, though most valued in *Canada*, is blown upon by the Company's Factors at the Bay, they not allowing so much for these as for the others; and therefore the *Indians* use them at home, or burn off the Hair, when they roast the Beavers, like Pigs, at an Entertainment when they feast together. The Beavers are delicious Food, but the Tongue and Tail the most delicious Parts of the whole. They multiply very fast, and if they can empty a Pond, and take the whole Lodge, they generally leave a Pair to breed, so that they are fully stocked again in Two or Three Years. The *American* Oxen, or Beeves, he says, have a large Bunch upon their Backs, which is by far the most delicious Part of them for Food, it being all as sweet as Marrow, juicy and rich, and weighs several Pounds.

"The Natives are so discouraged in their Trade with the Company that no Peltry is worth the Carriage; and the finest Furs are sold for very little. They gave but a Pound of Gunpowder for 4 Beavers, a Fathom of Tobacco for 7 Beavers, a Pound of Shot for 1, an Ell of coarse Cloth for 15, a Blanket for 12, Two Fish-hooks or Three Flints for 1; a Gun for 25, a Pistol for 10, a common Hat with white Lace, 7; an Ax, 4; a Billhook, 1; a Gallon of Brandy, 4; a chequer'd Shirt, 7; all of which are sold at a monstrous Profit, even to 2000 *per Cent*. Notwithstanding this discouragement, he computed that there were brought to the Factory in 1742, in all, 50,000 Beavers and above 9000 Martens.

"The smaller Game, got by Traps or Snares, are generally the Employment of the Women and Children; such as the Martens, Squirrels, Cats, Ermines, &c. The Elks, Stags, Reindeer, Bears, Tygers, wild Beeves, Wolves, Foxes, Beavers, Otters, Corajeu, &c., are the employment of the Men. The *Indians*, when they kill any Game for Food, leave it where they kill it, and send their wives next Day to carry it home. They go home in a direct Line, never missing their way, by observations they make of the Course they take upon their going out. The Trees all bend towards the South, and the Branches on that Side are larger and stronger than on the North Side; as also the Moss upon the Trees. To let their

Wives know how to come at the killed Game, they from Place to Place break off Branches and lay them in the Road, pointing them the Way they should go, and sometimes Moss; so that they never miss finding it.

' "In Winter, when they go abroad, which they must do in all Weathers, before they dress, they rub themselves all over with Bears Greaze or Oil of Beavers, which does not freeze; and also rub all the Fur of their Beaver Coats, and then put them on; they have also a kind of Boots or Stockings of Beaver's Skin, well oiled, with the Fur inwards; and above them they have an oiled Skin laced about their Feet, which keeps out the Cold, and also Water; and by this means they never freeze, nor suffer anything by Cold. In Summer, also, when they go naked, they rub themselves with these Oils or Grease, and expose themselves to the Sun without being scorched, their Skins always being kept soft and supple by it; nor do any Flies, Bugs, or Musketoos, or any noxious Insect, ever molest them. When they want to get rid of it, they go into the Water, and rub themselves all over with Mud or Clay, and let it dry upon them, and then rub it off; but whenever they are free from the Oil, the Flies and Musketoos immediately attack them, and oblige them again to anoint themselves. They are much afraid of the wild Humble Bee, they go naked in Summer, that they avoid them

as much as they can. They use no Milk from the time they are weaned, and they all hate to taste Cheese, having taken up an Opinion that it is made of Dead Men's Fat. They love Prunes and Raisins, and will give a Beaver-skin for Twelve of them, to carry to their Children; and also for a Trump or Jew's Harp. The Women have all fine Voices, but have never heard any Musical Instrument. They are very fond of all Kinds of Pictures or Prints, giving a Beaver for the least Print; and all Toys are like Jewels to them."

He reported that "the *Indians* west of Hudson's Bay live an erratic Life, and can have no Benefit by tame Fowl or Cattle. They seldom stay above a Fort-night in a Place, unless they find Plenty of Game. After having built their Hut, they disperse to get Game for their Food, and meet again at Night, after having killed enough to maintain them for that Day. When they find Scarcity of Game, they remove a League or Two farther; and thus they traverse through woody Countries and Bogs, scarce missing One Day, Winter or Summer, fair or foul, in the greatest Storms of Snow."

It has been often said that the great



HUSKIE DOGS FIGHTING.



PAINTING THE ROBE.

Peace River, which rises in British Columbia and flows through a pass in the Rocky Mountains into the northern plains, was named "the Unchaga," or Peace, "because" (to quote Captain W. F. Butler) "of the stubborn resistance offered by the all-conquering Crees, which induced that warlike tribe to make peace on the banks of the river, and leave at rest the beaver-hunters"—that is, the Beaver tribe—upon the river's banks. There is a sentence in La France's story that intimates a more probable and lasting reason for the name. He says that some Indians in the southern centre of Canada sent frequently to the Indians along some river near the mountains "with presents, to confirm the peace with them." The story is shadowy, of course, and yet La France, in the same narrative, gave other information which proved to be correct, and none which proved ridiculous. We know that there were "all-conquering" Crees, but there were also inferior ones called the Swampies, and there were others of only intermediate valor. As for the Beavers, Captain Butler himself offers other proof of their mettle besides their "stubborn resistance." He says that on one occasion a young Beaver chief shot the dog of

another brave in the Beaver camp. A hundred bows were instantly drawn, and ere night eighty of the best men of the tribe lay dead. There was a parley, and it was resolved that the chief who slew the dog should leave the tribe, and take his friends with him. A century later a Beaver Indian, travelling with a white man, heard his own tongue spoken by men among the Blackfeet near our border. They were the Sarcis, descendants of the exiled band of Beavers. They had become the most reckless and valorous members of the warlike Blackfeet confederacy.

La France said that the nations who "go up the river" with presents, to confirm the peace with certain Indians, were three months in going, and that the Indians in question live beyond a range of mountains beyond the Assiniboins (a plains tribe). Then he goes on to say that still farther beyond those Indians "are nations who have not the use of fire-arms, by which many of them are made slaves and sold"—to the Assiniboins and others. These are plainly the Pacific coast Indians. And even so long ago as that (about 1740), half a century before Mackenzie and Vancouver met on the Pacific coast, La France had told the story of an Indian who had

gone at the head of a band of thirty braves and their families to make war on the Flatheads "on the Western Ocean of America." They were from autumn until the next April in making the journey, and they "saw many Black Fish spouting up in the sea." It was a case of what the Irish call "spoiling for a fight,"

their wildest period were tremendous. Far up in the wilderness of British America there are legends of visits by the Iroquois. The Blackfeet believe that their progenitors roamed as far south as Mexico for horses, and the Crees of the plains evinced a correct knowledge of the country that lay beyond the Rocky Mountains



COURRIER DU BOIS.

for they had to journey fifteen hundred miles to meet "enemies" whom they never had seen, and who were peaceful, and inhabited more or less permanent villages. The plainsmen got more than they sought. They attacked a village, were outnumbered, and lost half their force, besides having several of their men wounded. On the way back all except the man who told the story died of fatigue and famine.

The journeys which Indians made in

in their conversations with the first whites who traded with them. Yet those white men, the founders of an organized fur trade, clung to the scene of their first operations for more than one hundred years, while the bravest of their more enterprising rivals in the Northwest Company only reached the Pacific, with the aid of eight Iroquois braves, one hundred and twenty years after the English king chartered the senior company! The

French were the true Yankees of that country. They and their half-breeds were always in the van as explorers and traders, and as early as 1731 M. Varennes de la Verandrye, licensed by the Canadian government as a trader, penetrated the West as far as the Rockies, leading Sir Alexander Mackenzie to that extent by more than sixty years.

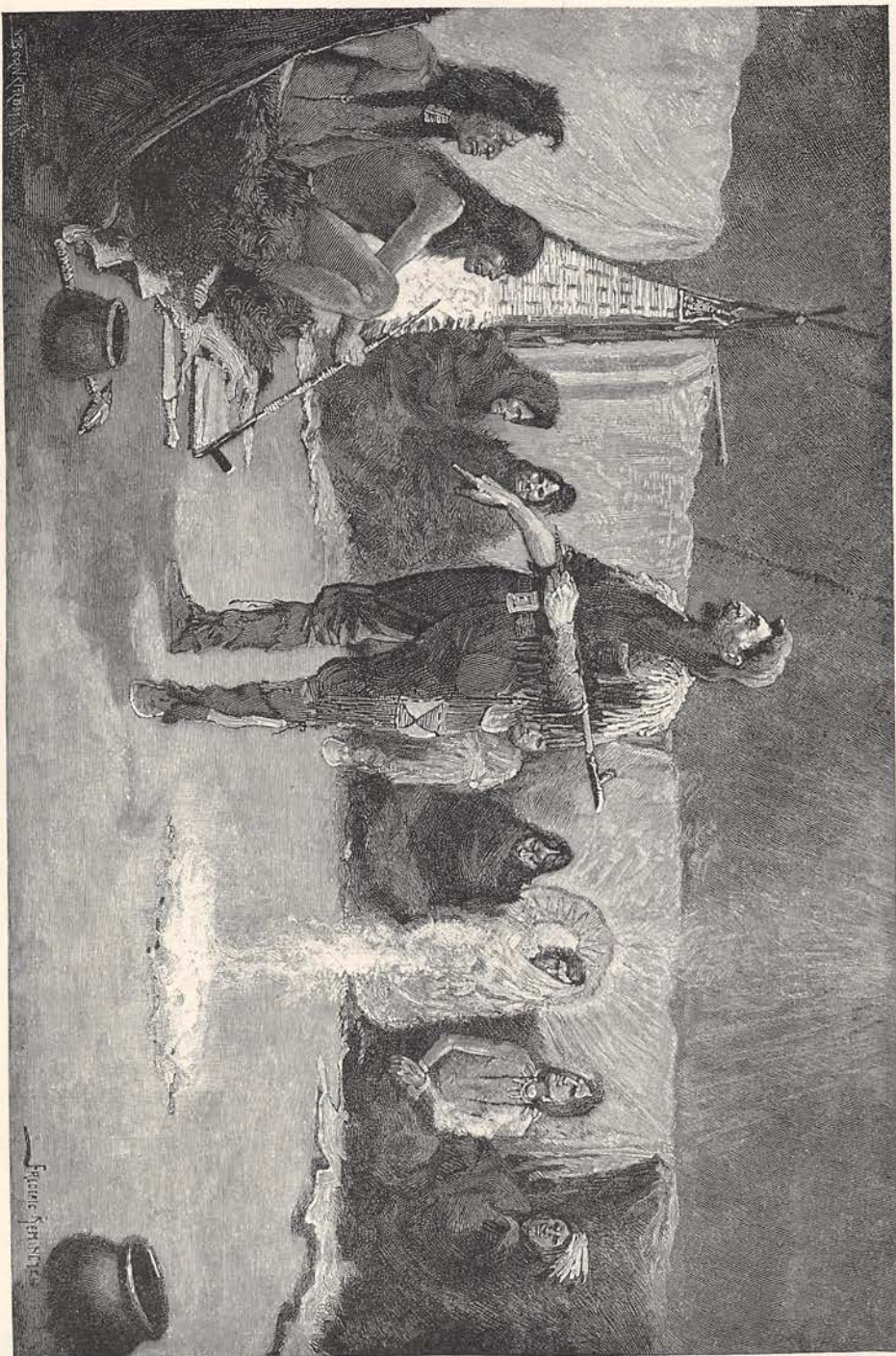
But to return to the first serious trouble the Hudson Bay Company met. The investigation of its affairs by Parliament produced nothing more than the picture I have presented. The committee reported that if the original charter bred a monopoly, it would not help matters to give the same privileges to others. As the questioned legality of the charter was not competently adjudicated upon, they would not allow another company to invade the premises of the older one.

At this time the great company still hugged the shores of the bay, fearing the Indians, the half-breeds, and the French. Their posts were only six in all, and were mainly fortified with palisaded enclosures, with howitzers and swivels, and with men trained to the use of guns. Moose Fort and the East Main factory were on either side of James Bay, Forts Albany, York, and Prince of Wales followed up the west coast, and Henley was the southernmost and most inland of all, being on Moose River, a tributary of James Bay. The French at first traded beyond the field of Hudson Bay operations, and their castles were their canoes. But when their great profits and familiarity with the trade tempted the thrifty French capitalists and enterprising Scotch merchants of Upper Canada into the formation of the rival Northwest Trading Company in 1783, fixed trading-posts began to be established all over the Prince Rupert's Land, and even beyond the Rocky Mountains in British Columbia. By 1818 there were about forty Northwest posts as against about two dozen Hudson Bay factories. The new company not only disputed but ignored the chartered rights of the old company, holding that the charter had not been sanctioned by Parliament, and was in every way unconstitutional as creative of a monopoly. Their French partners and *engagés* shared this feeling, especially as the French crown had been first in the field with a royal charter. Growing bolder and bolder, the Northwest Company resolved to drive the Hud-

son Bay Company to a legal test of their rights, and so in 1803-4 they established a Northwest fort under the eyes of the old company on the shore of Hudson Bay, and fitted out ships to trade with the natives in the strait. But the Englishmen did not accept the challenge; for the truth was they had their own doubts of the strength of their charter.

They pursued a different and for them an equally bold course. That hard-headed old nobleman the fifth Earl of Selkirk came uppermost in the company as the engineer of a plan of colonization. There was plenty of land, and some wholesale evictions of Highlanders in Sutherlandshire, Scotland, had rendered a great force of hardy men homeless. Selkirk saw in this situation a chance to play a long but certainly triumphant game with his rivals. His plan was to plant a colony which should produce grain and horses and men for the old company, saving the importation of all three, and building up not only a nursery for men to match the *courriers du bois*, but a stronghold and a seat of a future government in the Hudson Bay interest. Thus was ushered in a new and important era in Canadian history. It was the opening of that part of Canada; by a loop-hole rather than a door, to be sure.

Lord Selkirk's was a practical soul. On one occasion in animadverting against the Northwest Company he spoke of them contemptuously as fur-traders, yet he was the chief of all fur-traders, and had been known to barter with an Indian himself at one of the forts for a fur. He held up the opposition to the scorn of the world as profiting upon the weakness of the Indians by giving them alcohol, yet he ordered distilleries set up in his colony afterwards, saying, "We grant the trade is iniquitous, but if we don't carry it on others will; so we may as well put the guineas in our own pockets." But he was the man of the moment, if not for it. His scheme of colonization was born of desperation on one side and distress on the other. It was pursued amid terrible hardship, and against incessant violence. It was consummated through bloodshed. The story is as interesting as it is important. The facts are obtained mainly from "Papers relating to the Red River Settlement, ordered to be printed by the House of Commons, July 12, 1819." Lord Selkirk owned 40,000



A FUR-TRADER IN THE COUNCIL, TEPPE.

Francis J. Smith

of the £105,000 (or shares) of the Hudson Bay Company; therefore, since 25,000 were held by women and children, he held half of all that carried votes. He got from the company a grant of a large tract around what is now Winnipeg, to form an agricultural settlement for supplying the company's posts with provisions. We have seen how little disposed its officers were to open the land to settlers, or to test its agricultural capacities. No one, therefore, will wonder that when this grant was made several members of the governing committee resigned. But a queer development of the moment was a strong opposition from holders of Hudson Bay stock who were also owners in that company's great rival, the Northwest Company. Since the enemy persisted in prospering at the expense of the old company, the moneyed men of the senior corporation had taken stock of their rivals. These doubly interested persons were also in London, so that the Northwest Company was no longer purely Canadian. The opponents within the Hudson Bay Company declared civilization to be at all times unfavorable to the fur trade, and the Northwest people argued that the colony would form a nursery for servants of the Bay Company, enabling them to oppose the Northwest Company more effectually, as well as affording such facilities for new-comers as must destroy their own monopoly. The Northwest Company denied the legality of the charter rights of the Hudson Bay Company because Parliament had not confirmed Charles II.'s charter.

The colonists came, and were met by Miles McDonnell, an ex-captain of Canadian volunteers, as Lord Selkirk's agent. He styled himself "captain" and "governor," though he admitted he had no warrant to do so. The immigrants landed on the shore of Hudson Bay, and passed a forlorn winter. They met some of the Northwest Company's people under Alexander McDonnell, a cousin and brother-in-law to Miles McDonnell. Although Captain Miles read the grant to Selkirk in token of his sole right to the land, the settlers were hospitably received and well treated by the Northwest people. The settlers reached the place of colonization in August, 1812. This place is what was known as Fort Garry until Winnipeg was built. It was at first called "the Forks of the Red River," because the Assiniboin

there joined the Red. Lord Selkirk outlined his policy at the time in a letter in which he bade Miles McDonnell give the Northwest people solemn warning that the lands were Hudson Bay property, and they must remove from them; that they must not fish, and that if they did their nets were to be seized, their buildings were to be destroyed, and they were to be treated "as you would poachers in England."

The trouble began at once. Miles accused Alexander of trying to inveigle colonists away from him. He trained his men in the use of guns, and uniformed a number of them. He forbade the exportation of any supplies from the country, and when some Northwest men came to get buffalo meat they had hung on racks in the open air, according to the custom of the country, he sent armed men to send the others away. He intercepted a band of Northwest canoe-men, stationing men with guns and with two field-pieces on the river; and he sent to a Northwest post lower down the river demanding the provisions stored there, which, when they were refused, were taken by force, the door being smashed in. For this Hudson Bay clerk was arrested, and Captain Miles's men went to the rescue. Two armed forces met, but happily slaughter was averted. Miles McDonnell justified his course on the ground that the colonists were distressed by need of food. It transpired at the time that one of his men while making cartridges for a cannon remarked that he was making them "for those — Northwest rascals. They have run too long, and shall run no longer." After this Captain Miles ordered the stoppage of all buffalo-hunting on horseback, as the practice kept the buffalo at a distance, and drove them into the Sioux country, where the local Indians dared not go.

But though Captain McDonnell was aggressive and vexatious, the Northwest Company's people, who had begun the mischief, even in London, were not now passive. They relied on setting the half-breeds and Indians against the colonists. They urged that the colonists had stolen Indian real estate in settling on the land, and that in time every Indian would starve as a consequence. At the forty-fifth annual meeting of the Northwest Company's officers, August, 1814, Alexander McDonnell said, "Nothing but the

complete downfall of the colony will satisfy some, by fair or foul means—a most desirable object, if it can be accomplished; so here is at it with all my heart and energy." In October, 1814, Captain McDonnell ordered the Northwest Company to remove from the territory within six months.

The Indians, first and last, were the friends of the colonists. They were be-

servants doing a trifling service for Captain Miles McDonnell, he sent him upon a journey for which every *engagé* of the Northwest Company bound himself liable in joining the company; that was to make the trip to Montreal, a voyage held *in terrorem* over every servant of the corporation. More than that, he confiscated four horses and a wagon belonging to this



BUFFALO MEAT FOR THE POST.

friendied by the whites, and in turn they gave them succor when famine fell upon them. Many of Captain Miles McDonnell's orders were in their interest, and they knew it. Katawabetay, a chief, was tempted with a big prize to destroy the settlement. He refused. On the opening of navigation in 1815 chiefs were bidden from the country around to visit the Northwest factors, and were by them asked to destroy the colony. Not only did they decline, but they hastened to Captain Miles McDonnell to acquaint him with the plot. Duncan Cameron now appears foremost among the Northwest Company's agents, being in charge of that company's post on the Red River, in the Selkirk grant. He told the chiefs that if they took the part of the colonists "their camp fires should be totally extinguished." When Cameron caught one of his own

man, and charged him on the company's books with the sum of 800 livres for an Indian squaw, whom the man had been told he was to have as his slave for a present.

But though the Indians held aloof from the great and cruel conspiracy, the half-breeds readily joined in it. They treated Captain McDonnell's orders with contempt, and arrested one of the Hudson Bay men as a spy upon their hunting with horses. There lived along the Red River, near the colony, about thirty Canadians and seventy half-breeds, born of Indian squaws and the servants or officers of the Northwest Company. One-quarter of the number of "breeds" could read and write, and were fit to serve as clerks; the rest were literally half savage, and were employed as hunters, canoe-men, "packers" (freighters), and

guides. They were naturally inclined to side with the Northwest Company, and in time that corporation sowed dissension among the colonists themselves, picturing to them exaggerated danger from the Indians, and offering them free passage to Upper Canada. They paid at least one of the leading colonists £100 for furthering discontent in the settlement, and four deserters from the colony stole all the Hudson Bay field-pieces, iron swivels, and the howitzer. There was constant irritation and friction between the factions. In an affray far up at Isle-à-la-Crosse a man was killed on either side. Half-breeds came past the colony singing war-songs, and notices were posted around Fort Garry reading, "Peace with all the world except in Red River." The Northwest people demanded the surren-

der of Captain McDonnell that he might be tried on their charges, and on June 11, 1815, a band of men fired on the colonial buildings. The captain afterward surrendered himself, and the remnant of the colony, thirteen families, went to the head of Lake Winnipeg. The half-breeds burned the buildings, and divided the horses and effects.

But in the autumn all came back with Colin Robertson, of the Bay Company, and twenty clerks and servants. These were joined by Governor Robert Semple, who brought 160 settlers from Scotland. Semple was a man of consequence at home, a great traveller, and the author of a book on travels in Spain. But he came in no conciliatory mood, and the foment was kept up. The Northwest Company tried to starve the colonists, and Governor Semple destroyed the enemy's fort below Fort Garry. Then came the end—a decisive battle and massacre.

Sixty-five men on horses, and with some carts, were sent by Alexander McDonnell, of the Northwest Company, up the river toward the colony. They were led by Cuthbert Grant, and included six Canadians, four Indians, and fifty-four half-breeds. It was afterward said they went on innocent business, but every man was armed, and the "breeds" were naked, and painted all over to look like Indians. They got their paint of the Northwest officers. Moreover, there had been rumors that the colonists were to be driven away, and that "the land was to be drenched with blood." It was on June 19, 1816, that runners notified the colony that the others were coming. Semple was at Fort Douglas, near Fort Garry. When apprised of the close approach of his assailants, the governor seems not to have appreciated his danger, for he said, "We must go and meet those people; let twenty men follow me." He put on his cocked hat and sash, his pistols, and shouldered his double-barrelled fowling-piece. The others carried a wretched lot of guns—some with the locks gone, and many that were useless. It was marshy ground, and they straggled on in loose order. They met an old soldier who had served in the army at home, and who said the enemy was very numerous, and that the governor had better bring along his two field-pieces.



THE INDIAN HUNTER OF 1750.

"No, no," said the governor; "there is no occasion. I am only going to speak to them."

Nevertheless, after a moment's reflection, he did send back for one of the great guns, saying it was well to have it in case of need. They halted a short time for the cannon, and then perceived the Northwest party pressing toward them on their horses. By a common impulse the governor and his followers began a retreat, walking backwards, and at the same time spreading out a single line to present a longer front. The enemy continued to advance at a hand-gallop. From out among them rode a Canadian named

Boucher, the rest forming a half-moon behind him. Waving his hand in an insolent way to the governor, Boucher called out, "What do you want?"

"What do you want?" said Governor Semple.

"We want our fort," said Boucher, meaning the fort Semple had destroyed.

"Go to your fort," said the governor.

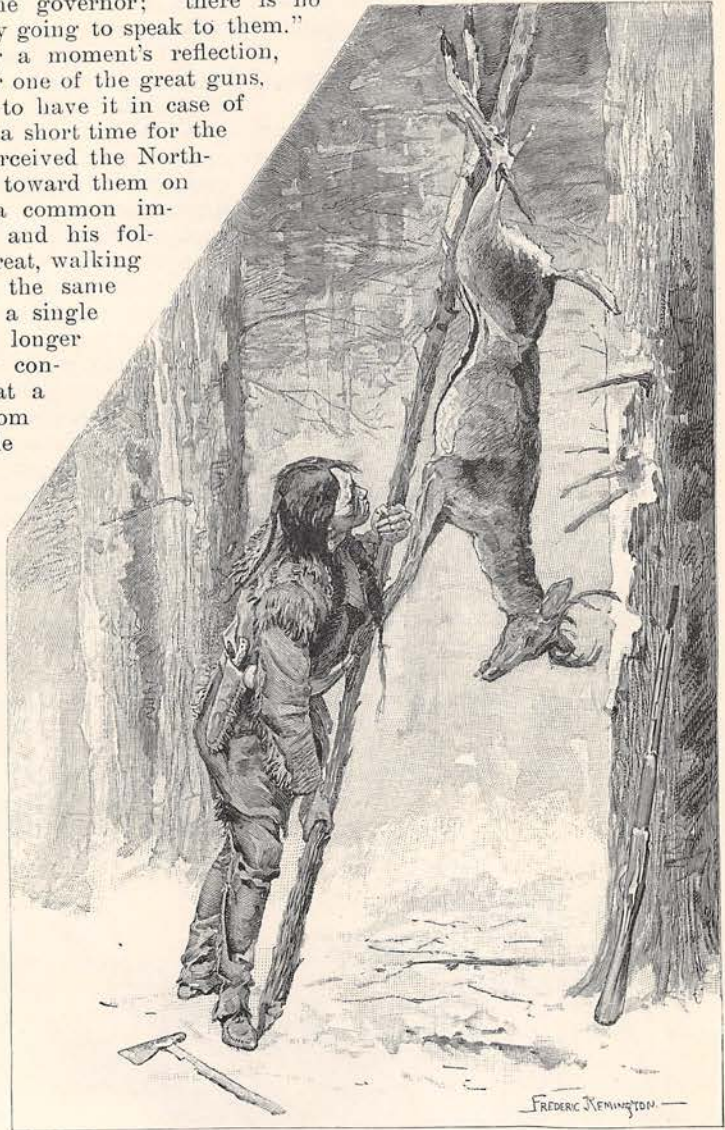
"Why did you destroy our fort, you rascal?" Boucher demanded.

"Scoundrel, do you tell me so?" the governor replied, and ordered the man's arrest.

Some say he caught at Boucher's gun. But Boucher slipped off his horse, and on the instant a gun was fired, and a Hudson Bay clerk fell dead. Another shot wounded Governor Semple, and he called to his followers,

"Do what you can to take care of yourselves."

Then there was a volley from the Northwest force, and with the clearing of the smoke it looked as though all the



INDIAN HUNTER HANGING DEER OUT OF THE REACH OF WOLVES.

governor's party were killed or wounded. Instead of taking care of themselves they had rallied around their wounded leader. Captain Rogers, of the governor's party, who had fallen, rose to his feet, and ran toward the enemy crying for mercy in English and broken French, when Thomas McKay, a "breed" and Northwest clerk, shot him through the head, another cutting his body open with a knife.

Cuthbert Grant (who, it was charged,

had shot Governor Semple) now went to the governor, while the others despatched the wounded.

Semple said, "Are you not Mr. Grant?"

"Yes," said the other.

"I am not mortally wounded," said the governor, "and if you could get me conveyed to the fort, I think I should live."

But when Grant left his side an Indian named Ma-chi-ca-taou shot him, some say through the breast, and some have it that he put a pistol to the governor's head. Grant could not stop the savages. The bloodshed had crazed them. They slaughtered all the wounded, and, worse yet, they terribly maltreated the bodies. Twenty-two Hudson Bay men were killed, and one on the other side was wounded.

There is a story that Alexander McDonnell shouted for joy when he heard the news of the massacre. One witness, who did not hear him shout, reports that he exclaimed to his friends: "*Sacré nom de Dieu! Bonnes nouvelles; vingt-deux Anglais tués!*" (—! Good news; twenty-two English slain!) It was afterward alleged that the slaughter was approved by every officer of the Northwest Company whose comments were recorded.

It is a saying up in that country that

twenty-six out of the sixty-five in the attacking party died violent deaths. The record is only valuable as indicating the nature and perils of the lives the hunters and half-breeds led. First, a Frenchman dropped dead while crossing the ice on the river, his son was stabbed by a comrade, his wife was shot, and his children were burned; "Big Head," his brother, was shot by an Indian; Coutonohais dropped dead at a dance; Battosh was mysteriously shot; Lavigne was drowned; Fraser was run through the body by a Frenchman in Paris; Baptiste Morallé, while drunk, was thrown into a fire by inebriated companions and burned to death; another died drunk on a roadway; another was wounded by the bursting of his gun; small-pox took the eleventh; Duplcis was empaled upon a hay-fork, on which he jumped from a haystack; Parisien was shot, by a person unknown, in a buffalo-hunt; another lost his arm by carelessness; Gardapie, "the brave," was scalped and shot by the Sioux; so was Vallée; Ka-te-tee-geese was scalped and cut in pieces by the Gros-Ventres; Pe-me-can-toss was thrown in a hole by his people; and another Indian and his wife and children were killed by lightning. Yet another was gored to death by a buffalo. The rest of the twenty-six died by being frozen, by drowning, by drunkenness, or by shameful disease.

It is when things are at their worst that they begin to mend, says a silly old proverb; but when history is studied these desperate situations often seem part of the mending,

not of themselves, but of the broken cause of progress. There was a little halt here in Canada, as we shall see, but the seed of settlement had been planted, and thenceforth continued to grow. Lord Selkirk came with all speed, reaching Canada in 1817. It was now an English colony, and when he asked for a body-guard, the government gave him two sergeants and twelve soldiers of the



MAKING THE SNOW-SHOE.

Régiment de Meuron. He made these the nucleus of a considerable force of Swiss and Germans who had formerly served in that regiment, and he pursued a triumphal progress to what he called his territory of Assiniboin, capturing all the Northwest Company's forts on the route, imprisoning the factors, and sending to jail in Canada all the accessaries to the massacre, on charges of arson, murder, robbery, and "high misdemeanors." Such was the prejudice against the Hudson Bay Company and the regard for the home corporation that all were acquitted, and suits for very heavy damages were lodged against him.

Selkirk sought to treat with the Indians for his land, which they said belonged to the Chippeways and the Crees. Five chiefs were found whose right to treat was acknowledged by all. On July 18, 1817, they deeded the territory to the king, "for the benefit of Lord Selkirk," giving him a strip two miles wide on either side of the Red River from Lake Winnipeg to Red Lake, north of the United States boundary, and along the Assiniboin from Fort Garry to the Muskrat River, as well as within two circles of six miles radius around Fort Garry and Pembina, now in Dakota. Indians do not know what miles are; they measure distance by the movement of the sun while on a journey. They determined two miles in this case to be "as far as you can see daylight under a horse's belly on the level prairie." On account of Selkirk's liberality they dubbed him "the silver chief." He agreed to give them for the land 200 pounds of tobacco a year. He named his settlement Kildonan, after that place in Helmsdale, Sutherlandshire, Scotland. He died in 1821, and in 1836 the Hudson Bay Company bought the land back from his heirs for £84,000. The Swiss and Germans of his regiment remained, and many retired servants of



A HUDSON BAY MAN (QUARTER-BREED).

the company bought and settled there, forming the aristocracy of the place—a queer aristocracy to our minds, for many of the women were Indian squaws, and the children were "breeds."

Through the perseverance and tact of the Right Hon. Edward Ellice, to whom the government had appealed, all differences between the two great fur-trading companies were adjusted, and in 1821 a coalition was formed. At Ellice's suggestion the giant combination then got from Parliament exclusive privileges beyond the waters that flow into Hudson Bay, over the Rocky Mountains and to the Pacific, for a term of twenty years. These extra privileges were surrendered in 1838, and were renewed for twenty years longer. Then, in 1858, it happened that they expired, and the rush for gold occurred in New Caledonia (now British Columbia). That territory then became a crown colony, and it and Vancouver Island, which had taken on a colonial character at the time of the Cali-

fornia gold fever (1849), were united in 1866. The extra privileges of the fur-traders were therefore not again renewed. In 1871 all the colonies of Canada were confederated, and whatever presumptive rights the Hudson Bay Company got under Charles II.'s charter were vacated in consideration of a payment by Canada of \$1,500,000 cash, half of all surveyed lands within the fertile belt, and 50,000 acres surrounding the company's posts. It is estimated that the land grant amounts to seven millions of acres, worth twenty millions of dollars, exclusive of all town sites.

Thus we reach the present condition of the company, 230 years old, maintaining 200 central posts and unnumbered dependent ones, and trading in Labrador on the Atlantic; at Massett, on Queen Charlotte Island, in the Pacific; and deep within the Arctic Circle in the North. The company was newly capitalized not long ago with 100,000 shares at £20 (ten millions of dollars), but, in addition to its dividends, it has paid back seven pounds in every twenty, reducing its capital to £1,300,000. The stock, however, is quoted at its original value. The supreme control of the company is vested in a governor, deputy governor, and five directors, elected by the stockholders in London. They delegate their powers to an executive resident in this country, who was until lately called the "Governor of Rupert's Land," but now is styled the chief commissioner, and is in absolute charge of the company and all its operations. His term of office is unlimited. The present incumbent is Mr. J. Wrigley, and the president is Sir Donald A. Smith, one of the foremost spirits in Canada, who worked his way up from a clerkship in the company. The business of the company is managed on the outfit system, the most old-fogyish, yet by its officers declared to be the most perfect, plan in use by any corporation. The method is to charge against each post all the supplies that are sent to it between June 1st and June 1st each year, and then to set against this the product of each post in furs and in cash received. It used to take seven years to arrive at the figures for a given year, but, owing to improved means of transportation, this is now done in two years.

Almost wherever you go in the newly settled parts of the Hudson Bay territory you find at least one free trader's shop set

up in rivalry with the old company's post. These are sometimes mere storehouses for the furs, and sometimes they look like, and are partly, general country stores. There can be no doubt that this rivalry is very detrimental to the fur trade from the stand-point of the future. The great company can afford to miss a dividend, and can lose at some points while gaining at others, but the free traders must profit in every district. The consequence is such a reckless destruction of game that the plan adopted by us for our seal-fisheries—the leasehold system—is envied and advocated in Canada. A greater proportion of trapping and an utter unconcern for the destruction of the game at all ages are now ravaging the wilderness. Many districts return as many furs as they ever yielded, but the quantity is kept up at fearful cost by the extermination of the game. On the other hand, the fortified wall of posts that opposed the development of Canada, and sent the surplus population of Europe to the United States, is rid of its palisades and field-pieces, and the main strongholds of the ancient company and its rivals have become cities. The old fort on Vancouver Island is now Victoria; Fort Edmonton is the seat of law and commerce in the Peace River region; old Fort William has seen Port Arthur rise by its side; Fort Garry is Winnipeg; Calgary, the chief city of Alberta, is on the site of another fort; and Sault Ste. Marie was once a Northwest post.

But civilization is still so far off from most of the "factories," as the company's posts are called, that the day when they shall become cities is in no man's thought or ken. And the communication between the centres and outposts is, like the life of the traders, more nearly like what it was in the old, old days than most of my readers would imagine. My Indian guides were battling with their paddles against the mad current of the Nipigon, above Lake Superior, one day last summer, and I was only a few hours away from Factor Flanagan's post near the great lake, when we came to a portage, and might have imagined from what we saw that time had pushed the hands back on the dial of eternity at least a century.

Some rapids in the river had to be avoided by the brigade that was being sent with supplies to a post far north at the head of Lake Nipigon. A cumbrous

THE COURRIER DU BOIS AND THE SAVAGE.



big-timbered little schooner, like a surf-boat with a sail, and a square-cut bateau had brought the men and goods to the "carry." The men were half-breeds as of old, and had brought along their women and children to inhabit a camp of smoky tents that we espied on a bluff close by; a typical camp, with the blankets hung on the bushes, the slatternly women and half-naked children squatting or running about, and smudge fires smoking between the tents to drive off mosquitoes and flies. The men were in groups below on the trail, at the water-side end of which were the boats' cargoes of shingles and flour and bacon and shot and powder in kegs, wrapped, two at a time, in rawhide. They were dark-skinned, short, spare men, without a surplus pound of flesh in the crew, and with longish coarse black hair and straggling beards. Each man carried a tomp-line, or long stout strap, which he tied in such a way around what he meant to carry that a broad part of the strap fitted over the crown of his head. Thus they "packed" the goods over the portage, their heads sustaining the loads, and their backs merely steadying them. When one had thrown his burden into place, he trotted off up the trail with springing feet, though the freight was packed so that 100 pounds should form a load.

For bravado one carried 200 pounds, and then all the others tried to pack as much, and most succeeded. All agreed that one, the smallest and least muscular-looking one among them, could pack 400 pounds.

As the men gathered around their "smudge" to talk with my party, it was seen that of all the parts of the picturesque costume of the *voyageur* or *bois-brûlé* of old—the capote, the striped shirt, the pipe-tomahawk, plumed hat, gay leggings, belt, and moccasins—only the red worsted belt and the moccasins have been retained. These men could recall the day when they had tallow and corn meal for rations, got no tents, and were obliged to carry 200 pounds, lifting one package, and then throwing a second one atop of it without assistance. Now they carry only 100 pounds at a time, and have tents and good food given to them.

We will not follow them, nor meet, as they did, the York boat coming down from the north with last winter's furs. In another article I will endeavor to lift the curtain from before the great fur country beyond them, to give a glimpse of the habits and conditions that prevail throughout a majestic territory where the rivers and lakes are the only roads, and canoes and dog-sleds are the only vehicles.

ATHELWOLD.

BY AMÉLIE RIVES.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

EDGAR, *King of Angleland.*
 ATHELWOLD, *Thane of Edgar.*
 OSWALD, *a priest.*
 FROTHI, *a dwarf and page to Athelwold.*
 OLGAR, *Earl of Devonshire.*
 SIGEBERT, *Athelwold's friend.*
 ELFREDA, *Olgar's daughter.*
 BERTHA, *a waiting-woman.*
 ELELEDA, *the King's favorite.*
 ELFREDA'S NURSE.

ACT I.

SCENE 1.—*A Hall in the Palace.*

Enter SIGEBERT and ATHELWOLD, followed by the dwarf FROTHI.

Sig. I tell thee, Athelwold, he means thee harm;

"Tis in the very trick o's eyelids.

Ath.

Well?

To mean harm is but little.

I say, go to. Wilt let him ruffle thee?

Sig. Thou speakest well o' wolves. Ay, Athelwold,

Edgar hath not yet rid us of them all.

Though he hath chased the greater part to Wales,

He hath a wolf-cub to his pampering
 Beneath this very roof.

Ath.

Who? Oswald?

Sig. Oswald himself, none other. Oswald—he— Ay,

That long-lipped, lean, up-looking, crook-eyed
 beast;

That cringing, fawning, fulsome, flattering
 knave;

That slow-speeched, soft-voiced, wide-smiled
 Oswald.

Ath.

So

Thou dost not love this Oswald overwell.

Sig. Thou knowest that I hate him.

Ath.

And for what?

Sig. Thou dost outpatience me! I hate him
 for—

I hate him on account of— Oh, I hate him
 Because that he is Oswald.

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"TALKING MUSQUASH."

BY JULIAN RALPH.

THE most sensational bit of "musquash talk" in more than a quarter of a century among the Hudson Bay Company's employés was started the other day, when Sir Donald A. Smith, the president of the oldest of England's great trading companies, sent a type-written letter to Winnipeg. If a Cree squaw had gone to the trading-shop at Moose Factory and asked for a bustle and a box of face-powder in exchange for a beaver-skin, the suggestion of changing conditions in the fur trade would have been trifling compared with the sense of instability to which this appearance of machine-writing gave rise. The reader may imagine for himself what a wrench civilization would have gotten if the world had laid down its goose-quills and taken up the type-writer all in one day. And that is precisely what Sir Donald Smith had done. The quill that had served to convey the orders of Alexander Mackenzie had satisfied Sir George Simpson; and, in our own time, while men like Lord Iddesleigh, Lord Kimberley, and Mr. Goschen sat around the candle-lighted table in the board-room of the company in London, quill pens were the only ones at hand. But Sir Donald's letter was not only the product of a machine; it contained instructions for the use of the type-writer in the offices at Winnipeg, and there was in the letter a protest against illegible manual chirography such as had been received from many factories in the wilderness. Talking business in the fur trade has always been called "talking musquash" (musk-rat), and after that letter came the turn taken by that form of talk suggested a general fear that from the Arctic to our border and from Labrador to Queen Charlotte's Islands the can-vassers for competing machines will be

"racing" in all the posts, each to prove that his instrument can pound out more words in a minute than any other—in those posts where life has hitherto been taken so gently that when one day a factor heard that the battle of Waterloo had been fought and won by the English, he deliberately loaded the best trade gun in the storehouse and went out and fired it into the pulseless woods, although it was two years after the battle, and the disquieted Old World had long known the greater news that Napoleon was caged in St. Helena. The only reassuring note in the "musquash talk" to-day is sounded when the subject of candles is reached. The governor and committee in London still pursue their deliberations by candle-light.

But rebellion against their fate is idle, and it is of no avail for the old factors to make the point that Sir Donald found no greater trouble in reading their writing than they encountered when one of his missives had to be deciphered by them. The truth is that the tide of immigration which their ancient monopoly first shunted into the United States is now sweeping over their vast territory, and altering more than its face. Not only are the factors aware that the new rule confining them to share in the profits of the fur trade leaves to the mere stockholders far greater returns from land sales and storekeeping, but a great many of them now find village life around their old forts, and railroads close at hand, and Law setting up its officers at their doors, so that in a great part of the territory the romance of the old life, and their authority as well, has fled.

Less than four years ago I had passed by Qu'Appelle without visiting it, but last

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summer I resolved not to make the mistake again, for it was the last stockaded fort that could be studied without a tiresome and costly journey into the far north. It is on the Fishing Lakes, just beyond Manitoba. But on my way a Hudson Bay officer told me that they had just taken down the stockade in the spring, and that he did not know of a remaining "palisade" in all the company's system except one, which, curiously enough, had just been ordered to be put up around Fort Hazleton, on the Skeena River, in northern British Columbia, where some turbulent Indians have been very troublesome, and where whatever civilization there may be in Saturn seems nearer than our own. This one example of the survival of original conditions is far more eloquent of their endurance than the thoughtless reader would imagine. It is true that there has come a tremendous change in the status and spirit of the company. It is true that its officers are but newly bending to external authority, and that settlers have poured into the south with such demands for food, clothes, tools, and weapons as to create within the old corporation one of the largest of shopkeeping companies. Yet to-day, as two centuries ago, the Hudson Bay Company remains the greatest fur-trading association that exists.

The zone in which Fort Hazleton is situated reaches from ocean to ocean without suffering invasion by settlers, and far above it to the Arctic Sea is a grand belt wherein time has made no impress since the first factory was put up there. There and around it is a region, nearly two-thirds the size of the United States, which is as if our country were meagrely dotted with tiny villages at an average distance of five days apart, with no other means of communication than canoe or dog train, and with not above a thousand white men in it, and not as many pure-blooded white women as you will find registered at a first-class New York hotel on an ordinary day. The company employs between 1500 and 2000 white men, and I am assuming that half of them are in the fur country.

We know that for nearly a century the company clung to the shores of Hudson Bay. It will be interesting to peep into one of its forts as they were at that time; it will be amazing to see what a country that bay-shore territory was and is.

There and over a vast territory three seasons come in four months—spring in June, summer in July and August, and autumn in September. During the long winter the earth is blanketed deep in snow, and the water is locked beneath ice. Geese, ducks, and smaller birds abound as probably they are not seen elsewhere in America, but they either give place to or share the summer with mosquitoes, black-flies, and "bull-dogs" (*tabanus*) without number, rest, or mercy. For the land around Hudson Bay is a vast level marsh, so wet that York Fort was built on piles, with elevated platforms around the buildings for the men to walk upon. Infrequent bunches of small pines and a litter of stunted swamp-willows dot the level waste, the only considerable timber being found upon the banks of the rivers. There is a wide belt called the Arctic Barrens all along the north, but below that, at some distance west of the bay, the great forests of Canada bridge across the region north of the prairie and the plains, and cross the Rocky Mountains to reach the Pacific. In the far north the musk-ox descends almost to meet the moose and deer, and on the near slope of the Rockies the wood-buffalo—larger, darker, and fiercer than the bison of the plains, but very like him—still roams as far south as where the buffalo ran highest in the days when he existed.

Through all this northern country the cold in winter registers 40°, and even 50°, below zero, and the travel is by dogs and sleds. There men in camp may be said to dress to go to bed. They leave their winter's store of dried meat and frozen fish out-of-doors on racks all winter (and so they do down close to Lake Superior); they hear from civilization only twice a year at the utmost; and when supplies have run out at the posts, we have heard of their boiling the parchment sheets they use instead of glass in their windows, and of their cooking the fat out of beaver-skins to keep from starving, though beaver is so precious that such recourse could only be had when the horses and dogs had been eaten. As to the value of the beaver, the reader who never has purchased any for his wife may judge what it must be by knowing that the company has long imported buckskin from Labrador to sell to the Chippeways around Lake Nipigon in order that they may

not be tempted, as of old, to make thongs and moccasins of the beaver; for their deer are poor, with skins full of worm-holes, whereas beaver leather is very tough and fine.

But in spite of the severe cold winters, that are, in fact, common to all the fur territory, winter is the delightful season for the traders; around the bay it is the only endurable season. The winged pests of which I have spoken are by no means confined to the tide-soaked region close to the great inland sea. The whole country is as wet as that orange of which geographers speak when they tell us that the water on the earth's surface is proportioned as if we were to rub a rough orange with a wet cloth. Up in what we used to call British America the illustration is itself illustrated in the countless lakes of all sizes, the innumerable small streams, and the many great rivers that make waterways the roads, as canoes are the wagons, of the region. It is a vast



INDIAN HUNTERS MOVING CAMP.

paradise for mosquitoes, and I have been hunted out of fishing and hunting grounds by them as far south as the border. The “bull-dog” is a terror reserved for especial districts. He is the Sioux of the insect world, as pretty as a warrior in buckskin and beads, but carrying a red-hot sword blade, which, when sheathed in human flesh, will make the victim jump

a foot from the ground, though there is no after-pain or itching or swelling from the thrust.

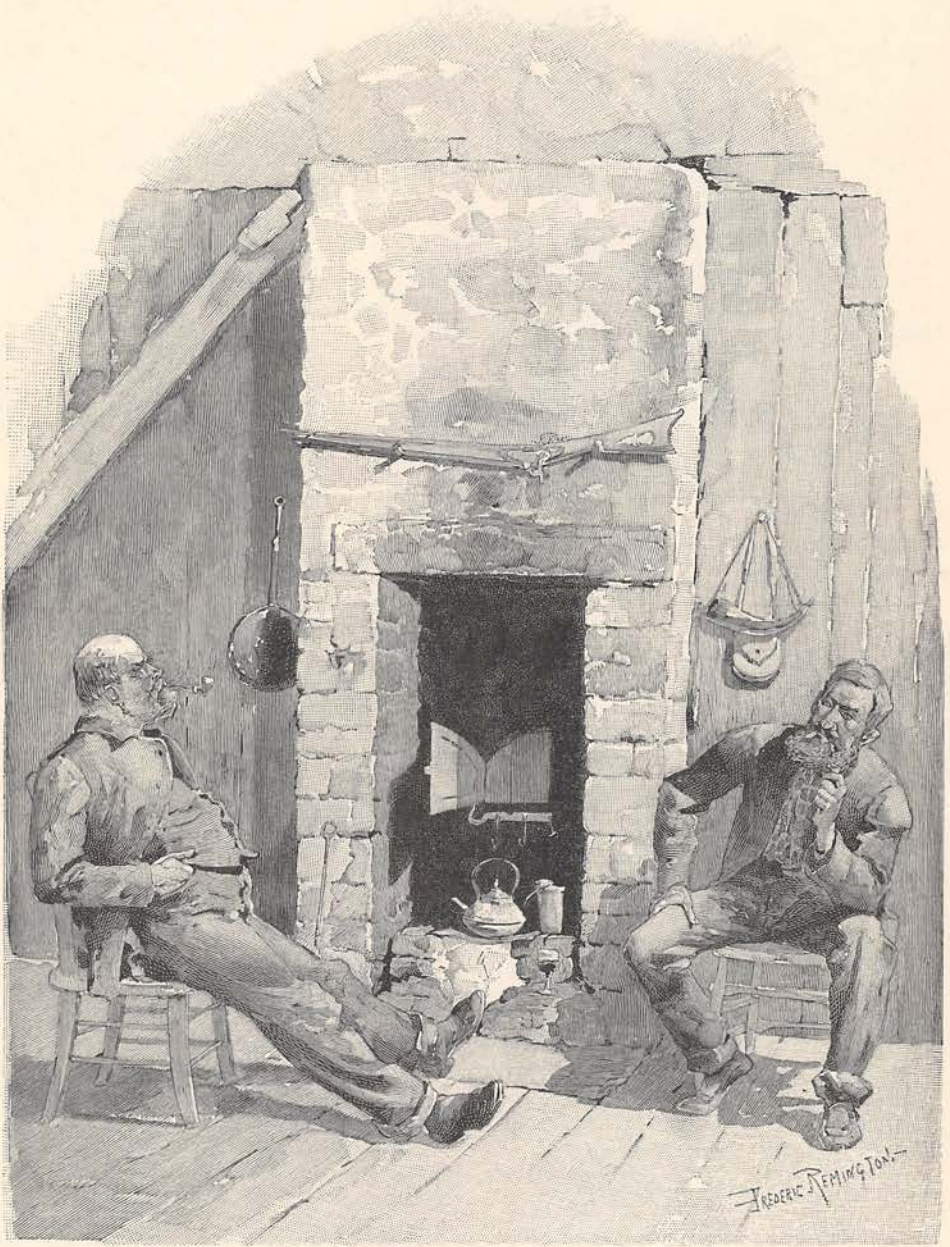
Having seen the country, let us turn to the forts. Some of them really were forts, in so far as palisades and sentry towers and double doors and guns can make a fort, and one twenty miles below Winnipeg was a stone fort. It is still standing. When the company ruled the territory as its landlord, the defended posts were on the plains among the bad Indians, and on the Hudson Bay shore, where vessels of foreign nations might be expected. In the forests, on the lakes and rivers, the character and behavior of the fish-eating Indians did not warrant armament. The stockaded forts were nearly all alike. The stockade was of timber, of about such a height that a man might look over it on tiptoe. It had towers at the corners, and York Fort had a great "lookout" tower within the enclosure. Within the barricade were the company's buildings, making altogether such a picture as New York presented when the Dutch founded it and called it New Amsterdam, except that we had a church and a stadt-house in our enclosure. The Hudson Bay buildings were sometimes arranged in a hollow square, and sometimes in the shape of a letter H, with the factor's house connecting the two other parts of the character. The factor's house was the best dwelling, but there were many smaller ones for the laborers, mechanics, hunters, and other non-commissioned men. A long, low, whitewashed log house was apt to be the clerks' house, and other large buildings were the stores where merchandise was kept, the fur-houses where the furs, skins, and pelts were stored, and the Indian trading-house, in which all the bartering was done. A powder house, ice-house, oil-house, and either a stable or a boat-house for canoes completed the post. All the houses had double doors and windows, and wherever the men lived there was a tremendous stove set up to battle with the cold.

The abode of jollity was the clerks' house, or bachelors' quarters. Each man had a little bedroom containing his chest, a chair, and a bed, with the walls covered with pictures cut from illustrated papers or not, according to each man's taste. The big room or hall, where all met in the long nights and on off days, was as bare as a baldpate so far as its

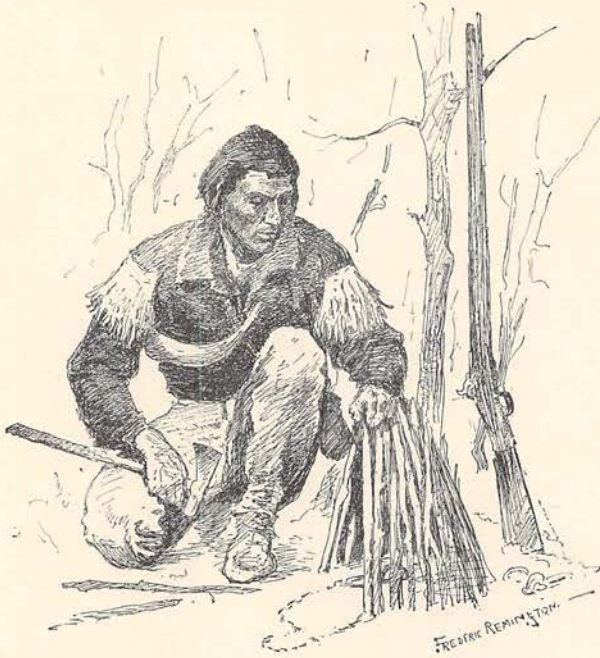
whitewashed or timbered walls went, but the table in the middle was littered with pipes, tobacco, papers, books, and pens and ink, and all around stood (or rested on hooks overhead) guns, foils, and fishing-rods. On Wednesdays and Saturdays there was no work in at least one big factory. Breakfast was served at nine o'clock, dinner at one o'clock, and tea at six o'clock. The food varied in different places. All over the prairie and plains great stores of pemmican were kept, and men grew to like it very much, though it was nothing but dried buffalo beef pounded and mixed with melted fat. But where they had pemmican they also enjoyed buffalo hunch in the season, and that was the greatest delicacy, except moose muffle (the nose of the moose), in all the territory. In the woods and lake country there were venison and moose as well as beaver—which is very good eating—and many sorts of birds, but in that region dried fish (salmon in the west, and lake trout or white-fish nearer the bay) was the staple. The young fellows hunted and fished and smoked and drank and listened to the songs of the *voyageurs* and the yarns of the "breeds" and Indians. For the rest there was plenty of work to do.

They had a costume of their own, and, indeed, in that respect there has been a sad change, for all the people, white, red, and crossed, dressed picturesquely. You could always distinguish a Hudson Bay man by his capote of light blue cloth with brass buttons. In winter they wore as much as a Quebec carter. They wore leather coats lined with flannel, edged with fur, and double-breasted. A scarlet worsted belt went around their waists, their breeches were of smoked buckskin, reaching down to three pairs of blanket socks and moose moccasins, with blue cloth leggins up to the knee. Their buckskin mittens were hung from their necks by a cord, and usually they wrapped a shawl of Scotch plaid around their necks and shoulders, while on each one's head was a fur cap with ear-pieces.

The French Canadians and "breeds," who were the *voyageurs* and hunters, made a gay appearance. They used to wear the company's regulation light blue capotes, or coats, in winter, with flannel shirts, either red or blue, and corduroy trousers gartered at the knee with bead-work. They all wore gaudy worsted



TALKING MUSQUASH.



SETTING A MINK-TRAP.

belts, long heavy woollen stockings—covered with gayly fringed leggings—fancy moccasins, and tuques, or feather-decked hats or caps bound with tinsel bands. In mild weather their costume was formed of a blue striped cotton shirt, corduroys, blue cloth leggings bound with orange ribbons, the inevitable sash or worsted belt, and moccasins. Every hunter carried a powder-horn slung from his neck, and in his belt a tomahawk, which often served also as a pipe. As late as 1862, Viscount Milton and W. B. Cheadle describe them in a book, *The Northwest Passage by Land*, in the following graphic language:

"The men appeared in gaudy array, with beaded fire-bag, gay sash, blue or scarlet leggings, girt below the knee with beaded garters, and moccasins elaborately embroidered. The (half-breed) women were in short, bright-colored skirts, showing richly embroidered leggings and white moccasins of cariboo-skin beautifully worked with flowery patterns in beads, silk, and moose hair."

The trading-room at an open post was—and is now—like a cross-roads store, having its shelves laden with every imaginable article that Indians like and hunters need—clothes, blankets, files, scalp-

knives, gun screws, flints, twine, fire-steels, awls, beads, needles, scissors, knives, pins, kitchen ware, guns, powder, and shot. An Indian who came in with furs threw them down, and when they were counted received the right number of castors—little pieces of wood which served as money—with which, after the hours of reflection an Indian spends at such a time, he bought what he wanted.

But there was a wide difference between such a trading-room and one in the plains country, or where there were dangerous Indians—such as some of the Crees, and the Chippeways, Blackfeet, Bloods, Sarcis, Sioux, Sicanies, Stonies, and others. In such places the Indians were let in only one or two at a time, the goods were hidden so as not to excite their cupidity, and

through a square hole grated with a cross of iron, whose spaces were only large enough to pass a blanket, what they wanted was given to them. That is all done away with now, except it be in northern British Columbia, where the Indians have been turbulent.

Farther on we shall perhaps see a band of Indians on their way to trade at a post. Their custom is to wait until the first signs of spring, and then to pack up their winter's store of furs, and take advantage of the last of the snow and ice for the journey. They hunt from November to May; but the trapping and shooting of bears go on until the 15th of June, for those animals do not come from their winter dens until May begins. They come to the posts in their best attire, and in the old days that formed as strong a contrast to their present dress as their leather tepees of old did to the cotton ones of to-day. Ballantyne, who wrote a book about his service with the great fur company, says merely that they were painted, and with scalp locks fringing their clothes, but in Lewis and Clarke's journal we read description after description of the brave costuming of these color-and-ornament-loving peo-

ple. Take the Sioux, for instance. Their heads were shaved of all but a tuft of hair, and feathers hung from that. Instead of the universal blanket of to-day, their main garment was a robe of buffaloeskin with the fur left on, and the inner surface dressed white, painted gaudily with figures of beasts and queer designs, and fringed with porcupine quills. They wore the fur side out only in wet weather. Beneath the robe they wore a shirt of dressed skin, and under that a leather belt, under which the ends of a breechclout of cloth, blanket stuff, or skin were

given out, each Indian had to surrender his knife before he got his tin cup.

The company made great use of the Iroquois, and considered them the best boatmen in Canada. Sir Alexander Mackenzie, of the Northwest Company, employed eight of them to paddle him to the Pacific Ocean by way of the Peace and Fraser rivers, and when the greatest of Hudson Bay executives, Sir George Simpson, travelled, Iroquois always propelled him. The company had a uniform for all its Indian employés—a blue, gray, or blanket capote, very loose, and



WOOD INDIANS COME TO TRADE.

tucked. They wore leggins of dressed antelope hide with scalp locks fringing the seams, and prettily beaded moccasins for their feet. They had necklaces of the teeth or claws of wild beasts, and each carried a fire-bag, a quiver, and a brightly painted shield, giving up the quiver and shield when guns came into use.

The Indians who came to trade were admitted to the store precisely as voters are to the polls under the Australian system—one by one. They had to leave their guns outside. When rum was

reaching below the knee, with a red worsted belt around the waist, a cotton shirt, no trousers, but artfully beaded leggins with wide flaps at the seams, and moccasins over blanket socks. In winter they wore buckskin coats lined with flannel, and mittens were given to them. We have seen how the half-breeds were dressed. They were long employed at women's work in the forts, at making clothing and at mending. All the mittens, moccasins, fur caps, deer-skin coats, etc., were made by them. They were also the washer-women.

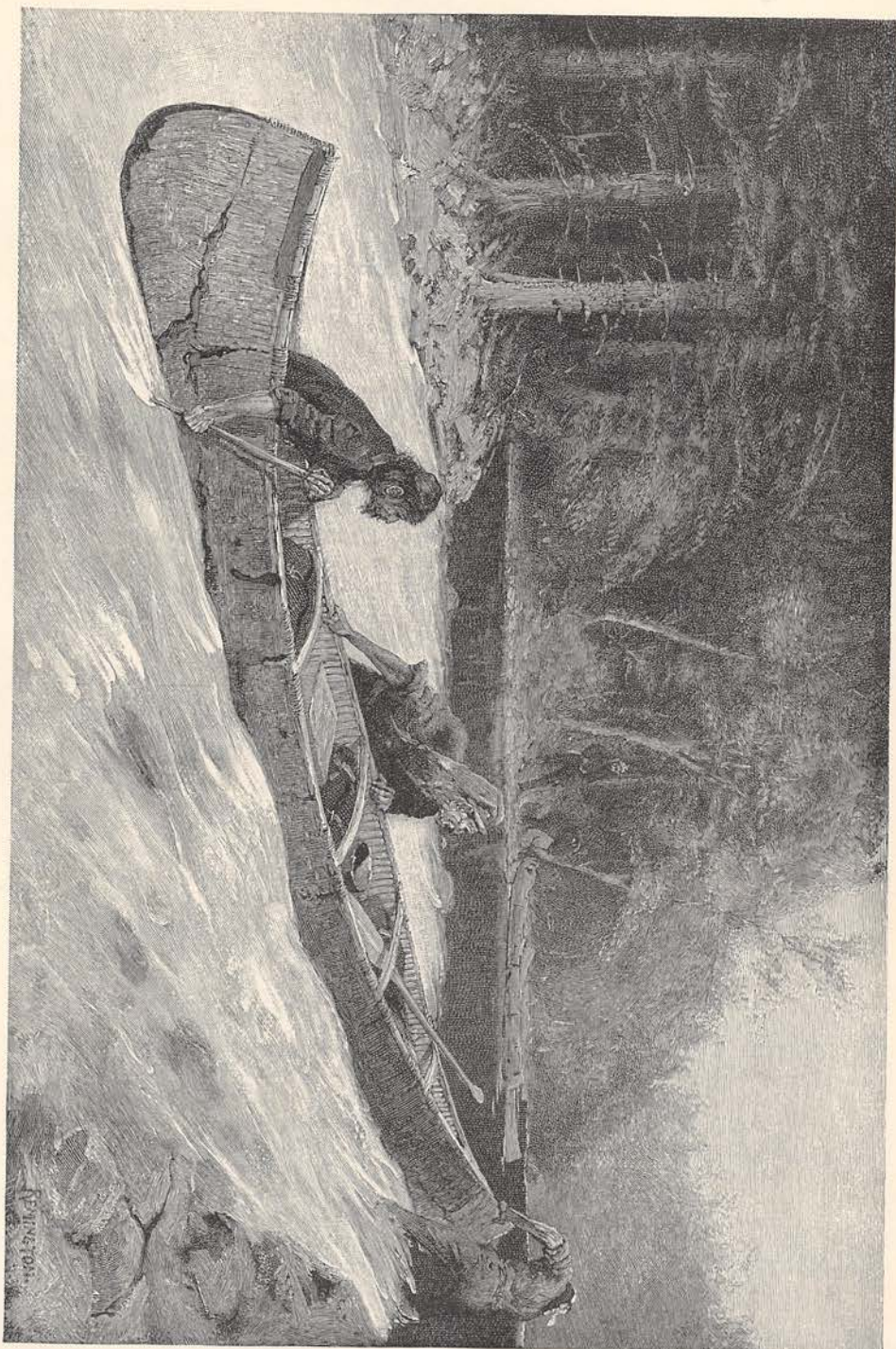
Perhaps the factor had a good time in the old days, or thought he did. He had a wife and servants and babies, and when a visitor came, which was not as often as snow-drifts blew over the stockade, he entertained like a lord. At first the factors used to send to London, to the head office, for a wife, to be added to the annual consignment of goods, and there must have been a few who sent to the Orkneys for the sweethearts they left there. But in time the rule came to be that they married Indian squaws. In doing this, not even the first among them acted blindly, for their old rivals and subsequent companions of the Northwest and X. Y. companies began the custom, and the French *voyageurs* and *courriers du bois* had mated with Indian women before there was a Hudson Bay Company. These rough and hardy woodsmen, and a larger number of half-breeds born of just such alliances, began at an early day to settle near the trading-posts. Sometimes they established what might be called villages, but were really close imitations of Indian camps, composed of a cluster of skin tepees, racks of fish or meat, and a swarm of dogs, women, and children. In each tepee was the fire-place, beneath the flue formed by the open top of the habitation, and around it were the beds of brush, covered with soft hides, the inevitable copper kettle, the babies swaddled in blankets or moss bags, the women and dogs, the gun and paddle, and the junks and strips of raw meat hanging overhead in the smoke. This has not changed to-day; indeed, very little that I shall speak of has altered in the true or far fur country. The camps exist yet. They are not so clean (or, rather, they are more dirty), and the clothes and food are poorer and harder to get; that is all.

The Europeans saw that these women were docile, or were kept in order easily by floggings with the tent poles; that they were faithful and industrious, as a rule, and that they were not all unprepossessing—from their point of view, of course. Therefore it came to pass that these were the most frequent alliances in and out of the posts in all that country. The consequences of this custom were so peculiar and important that I must ask leave to pause and consider them. In Canada we see that the white man thus made his bow to the redskin as a brother

in the truest sense. The old *courriers* of Norman and Breton stock, loving a wild, free life, and in complete sympathy with the Indian, bought or took the squaws to wife, learned the Indian dialects, and shared their food and adventures with the tribes. As more and more entered the wilderness, and at last came to be supported, in camps and at posts and as *voyageurs*, by the competing fur companies, there grew up a class of half-breeds who spoke English and French, married Indians, and were as much at home with the savages as with the whites. From this stock the Hudson Bay men have had a better choice of wives for more than a century. But when these "breeds" were turbulent and murderous—first in the attacks on Selkirk's colony, and next during the Riel rebellion—the Indians remained quiet. They defined their position when, in 1819, they were tempted with great bribes to massacre the Red River colonists. "No," said they; "the colonists are our friends." The men who sought to excite them to murder were the officers of the Northwest Company, who bought furs of them, to be sure, but the colonists had shared with the Indians in poverty and plenty, giving now and taking then. All were alike to the red men—friends, white men, and of the race that had taken so many of their women to wife. Therefore they went to the colonists to tell them what was being planned against them, and not from that day to this has an Indian band taken the war-path against the Canadians. I have read General Custer's theory that the United States had to do with meat-eating Indians, whereas the Canadian tribes are largely fish-eaters, and I have seen ten thousand references to the better Indian policy of Canada; but I can see no difference in the two policies, and between the Rockies and the Great Lakes I find that Canada had the Stonies, Blackfeet, and many other fierce tribes of buffalo-hunters. It is in the slow, close-growing acquaintance between the two races, and in the just policy of the Hudson Bay men toward the Indians, that I see the reason for Canada's enviable experience with her red men.

But even the Hudson Bay men have had trouble with the Indians in recent years, and one serious affair grew out of the relations between the company's servants and the squaws. There is etiquette

IN A STEEP CURRENT.





A VOYAGEUR OR CANOE-MAN OF GREAT
SLAVE LAKE.

even among savages, and this was ignored up at old Fort St. Johns, on the Peace River, with the result that the Indians slaughtered the people there and burned the fort. They were Sicanie Indians of that region, and after they had massacred the men in charge, they met a boat-load of white men coming up the river with goods. To them they turned their guns also, and only four escaped. It was up in that country likewise—just this side of the Rocky Mountains, where the plains begin to be forested—that a silly clerk in a post quarrelled with an Indian, and said to him, "Before you come back to this post again, your wife and child will be dead." He spoke hastily, and meant nothing, but squaw and pappoose hap-

pened to die that winter, and the Indian walked into the fort the next spring and shot the clerk without a word.

To-day the posts are little village-like collections of buildings, usually showing white against a green background in the prettiest way imaginable; for, as a rule, they cluster on the lower bank of a river, or the lower near shore of a lake. There are not clerks enough in most of them to render a clerks' house necessary, for at the little posts half-breeds are seen to do as good service as Europeans. As a rule, there is now a store or trading-house and a fur-house and the factor's house, the canoe-house and the stable, with a barn where gardening is done, as is often the case when soil and climate permit. Often the fur-house and store are combined, the furs being laid in the upper story over the shop. There is always a flag-staff, of course. This and the flag, with the letters "H. B. C." on its field, led to the old hunters' saying that the initials stood for "Here before Christ," because, no matter how far away from the frontier a man might go, in regions he fancied no white man had been, that flag and those letters stared him in the face. You will often find that the factor, rid of all the ancient timidity that called for "palisades and swivels," lives on the high upper bank above the store. The usual half-breed or Indian village is seldom farther than a couple of miles away, on the same water. The factor is still, as he always has been, responsible only to himself for the discipline and management of his post, and therefore among the factories we will find all sorts of homes—homes where a piano and the magazines are prized, and daughters educated abroad shed the lustre of refinement upon their surroundings, homes where no woman rules, and homes of the French half-breed type, which we shall see is a very different mould from that of the two sorts of British half-breed that are numerous. There never was a rule by which to gauge a post. In one you found religion valued and missions welcomed, while in others there never was sermon or hymn. In some, Hudson Bay rum met the rum of the free-traders, and in others no rum was bartered away. To-day, in this latter respect, the Dominion law prevails, and rum may not be given or sold to the red man.

When one thinks of the lives of these factors, hidden away in forest, mountain

chain, or plain, or arctic barren, seeing the same very few faces year in and year out, with breaches of the monotonous routine once a year when the winter's furs are brought in, and once a year when the mail-packet arrives—when one thinks of their isolation, and lack of most of those influences which we in our walks prize the highest, the reason for their choosing that company's service seems almost mysterious. Yet they will tell you there is a fascination in it. This could be understood so far as the half-breeds and French Canadians were concerned, for they inherited the liking; and, after all, though most of them are only laborers, no other laborers are so free, and none spice life with so much of adventure. But the factors are mainly men of ability and good origin, well fitted to occupy responsible positions, and at better salaries. However, from the outset the rule has been that they have become as enamored of the trader's life as soldiers and sailors always have of theirs. They have usually retired from it reluctantly, and some, having gone home to Europe, have begged leave to return.

The company has always been managed upon something like a military basis. Perhaps the original necessity for forts and men trained to the use of arms suggested this. The uniforms were in keeping with the rest. The lowest rank in the service is that of the laborer, who may happen to fish or hunt at times, but is employed—or enlisted, as the fact is, for a term of years—to cut wood, shovel snow, act as a porter or gardener, and labor generally about the post. The interpreter was usually a promoted laborer, but long ago the men in the trade, Indians and whites alike, met each other half-way in the matter of language. The highest non-commissioned rank in early days was that of the postmaster at large posts. Men of that rank often got charge of small outposts, and we read that they were "on terms of equality with gentlemen." To-day the service has lost these fine points, and the laborers and commissioned officers are sharply separated. The so-called "gentleman" begins as a prentice clerk, and after a few years becomes a clerk. His next elevation is to the rank of a junior chief trader, and so on through the grades of chief trader, factor, and chief factor, to the office of chief commissioner, or resident American manager, chosen by

the London board, and having full powers delegated to him. A clerk—or "clark," as the rank is called—may never touch a pen. He may be a trader. Then again he may be truly an accountant. With the rank he gets a commission, and that entitles him to a minimum guarantee, with a conditional extra income based on the profits of the fur trade. Men get promotions through the chief commissioner, and he has always made fitness, rather than seniority, the criterion. Retiring officers are salaried for a term of years, the original pension fund and system having been broken up.

Sir Donald A. Smith, the present governor of the company, made his way to the highest post from the place of a prentice clerk. He came from Scotland as a youth, and after a time was so unfortunate as to be sent to the coast of Labrador, where a man is as much out of both the world and contact with the heart of the company as it is possible to be. The military system was felt in that instance; but every man who accepts a commission engages to hold himself in readiness to go cheerfully to the north pole, or anywhere



VOYAGEUR WITH TUMPLINE.

between Labrador and the Queen Charlotte Islands. However, to a man of Sir Donald's parts no obstacle is more than a temporary impediment. Though he staid something like seventeen years in Labrador, he worked faithfully when there was work to do, and in his own time he read and studied voraciously. When the Riel rebellion—the first one—disturbed the country's peace, he appeared on the scene as commissioner for the government. Next he became chief commissioner for the Hudson Bay Company. After a time he resigned that office to go on the board in London, and thence he stepped easily to the governorship. His parents, whose home was in Morayshire, Scotland, gave him at his birth, in 1821, not only a constitution of iron, but that shrewdness which is only Scotch, and he afterward developed remarkable foresight, and such a grasp of affairs and of complex situations as to amaze his associates.

Of course his career is almost as singular as his gifts, and the governorship can scarcely be said to be the goal of the general ambition, for it has been most apt to go to a London man. Even ordinary promotion in the company is very slow, and it follows that most men live out their existence between the rank of clerk and that of chief factor. There are two hundred central posts, and innumerable dependent posts, and the officers are continually travelling from one to another, some in their districts, and the chief or supervising ones over vast reaches of country. In winter, when dogs and sleds are used, the men walk, as a rule, and it has been nothing for a man to trudge a thousand miles in that way on a winter's journey. Roderick Macfarlane, who was cut off from the world up in the Mackenzie district, became an indefatigable explorer, and made most of his journeys on snow-shoes. He explored the Peel, the Liard, and the Mackenzie, and their surrounding regions, and went far within the Arctic Circle, where he founded the most northerly post of the company. By the regular packet from Calgary, near our border, to the northernmost post is a three-thousand-mile journey. Macfarlane was fond of the study of ornithology, and classified and catalogued all the birds that reach the frozen regions.

I heard of a factor far up on the east side of Hudson Bay who reads his daily

newspaper every morning with his coffee—but of course such an instance is a rare one. He manages it by having a complete set of the London *Times* sent to him by each winter's packet, and each morning the paper of that date in the preceding year is taken from the bundle by his servant and dampened, as it had been when it left the press, and spread by the factor's plate. Thus he gets for half an hour each day a taste of his old habit and life at home.

There was another factor who developed artistic capacity, and spent his leisure at drawing and painting. He did so well that he ventured many sketches for the illustrated papers of London, some of which were published.

The half-breed has developed with the age and growth of Canada. There are now half-breeds and half-breeds, and some of them are titled, and others hold high official places. It occurred to an English lord not long ago, while he was being entertained in a government house in one of the parts of newer Canada, to inquire of his host, "What are these half-breeds I hear about? I should like to see what one looks like." His host took the nobleman's breath away by his reply. "I am one," said he. There is no one who has travelled much in western Canada who has not now and then been entertained in homes where either the man or woman of the household was of mixed blood, and in such homes I have found a high degree of refinement and the most polished manners. Usually one needs the information that such persons possess such blood. After that the peculiar black hair and certain facial features in the subject of such gossip attest the truthfulness of the assertion. There is no rule for measuring the character and quality of this plastic, receptive, and often very ambitious element in Canadian society, yet one may say broadly that the social position and attainments of these people have been greatly influenced by the nationality of their fathers. For instance, the French *habitants* and woodsmen far, far too often sank to the level of their wives when they married Indian women. Light-hearted, careless, unambitious, and drifting to the wilderness because of the absence of restraint there; illiterate, of coarse origin, fond of whiskey and gambling—they threw off superiority to the



VOYAGEURS IN CAMP FOR THE NIGHT.

J. H. Johnson

Indian, and evaded responsibility and concern in home management. Of course this is not a rule, but a tendency. On the other hand, the Scotch and English forced their wives up to their own standards. Their own home training, respect for more than the forms of religion, their love of home and of a permanent patch of ground of their own—all these had their effect, and that has been to rear half-breed children in proud and comfortable homes, to send them to mix with the children of cultivated persons in old communities, and to fit them with pride and ambition and cultivation for an equal start in the journey of life. Possessing such foundation for it, the equality has happily never been denied to them in Canada.

To-day the service is very little more inviting than in the olden time. The loneliness and removal from the touch of civilization remain throughout a vast region; the arduous journeys by sled and canoe remain; the dangers of flood and frost are undiminished. Unfortunately, among the changes made by time, one is that which robs the present factor's surroundings of a great part of that which was most picturesque. Of all the prettinesses of the Indian costuming one sees now only a trace here and there in a few tribes, while in many the moccasin and tepee, and in some only the moccasin, remain. The birch-bark canoe and the snow-shoe are the main reliance of both races, but the steamboat has been impressed into parts of the service, and most of the descendants of the old-time *voyageur* preserve only his worsted belt, his knife, and his cap and moccasins at the utmost. In places the *engagé* has become a mere deck hand. His scarlet paddle has rotted away; he no longer awakens the echoes of forest or cañon with *chansons* that died in the throats of a generation that has gone. In return, the horrors of intertribal war and of a precarious foothold among fierce and turbulent bands have nearly vanished; but there was a spice in them that added to the fascination of the service.

The dogs and sleds form a very interesting part of the Hudson Bay outfit. One does not need to go very deep into western Canada to meet with them. As close to our centre of population as Nipigon, on Lake Superior, the only roads into the north are the rivers and lakes, traversed

by canoes in summer and sleds in winter. The dogs are of a peculiar breed, and are called "huskies"—undoubtedly a corruption of the word Esquimaux. They preserve a closer resemblance to the wolf than any of our domesticated dogs, and exhibit their kinship with that scavenger of the wilderness in their nature as well as their looks. To-day their females, if tied and left in the forest, will often attest companionship with its denizens by bringing forth litters of wolfish progeny. Moreover, it will not be necessary to feed all with whom the experiment is tried, for the wolves will be apt to bring food to them as long as they are thus neglected by man. They are often as large as the ordinary Newfoundland dog, but their legs are shorter, and even more hairy, and the hair along their necks, from their shoulders to their skulls, stands erect in a thick bristling mass. They have the long snouts, sharp-pointed ears, and the tails of wolves, and their cry is a yelp rather than a bark. Like wolves they are apt to yelp in chorus at sunrise and at sunset. They delight in worrying peaceful animals, setting their own numbers against one, and they will kill cows, or even children, if they get the chance. They are disciplined only when at work, and are then so surprisingly obedient, tractable, and industrious as to plainly show that though their nature is savage and wolfish, they could be reclaimed by domestication. In isolated cases plenty of them are. As it is, in their packs, their battles among themselves are terrible, and they are dangerous when loose. In some districts it is the custom to turn them loose in summer on little islands in the lakes, leaving them to hunger or feast according as the supply of dead fish thrown upon the shore is small or plentiful. When they are kept in dog quarters they are simply penned up and fed during the summer, so that the savage side of their nature gets full play during long periods. Fish is their principal diet, and stores of dried fish are kept for their winter food. Corn meal is often fed to them also. Like a wolf or an Indian, a "husky" gets along without food when there is not any, and will eat his own weight of it when it is plenty.

A typical dog-sled is very like a toboggan. It is formed of two thin pieces of oak or birch lashed together with buckskin thongs and turned up high in front.



THE FACTOR'S FANCY TOBOGGAN.

It is usually about nine feet in length by sixteen inches wide. A leather cord is run along the outer edges for fastening whatever may be put upon the sled. Varying numbers of dogs are harnessed to such sleds, but the usual number is four. Traces, collars, and backbands form the harness, and the dogs are hitched one before the other. Very often the collars are completed with sets of sleigh-bells, and sometimes the harness is otherwise ornamented with beads, tassels, fringes, or ribbons. The leader, or foregoer, is always the best in the team. The dog next to him is called the steady dog, and the last is named the steer dog. As a rule, these faithful animals are treated harshly, if not brutally. It is a Hudson Bay axiom that no man who cannot curse in three languages is fit to drive them. The three profanities are, of course, English, French, and Indian, though whoever has heard the Northwest French knows that it ought to serve by itself, as it is half-soleed with Anglo-Saxon oaths and heeled with Indian obscenity. The rule with whoever goes on a dog-sled journey is that the

driver, or mock-passenger, runs behind the dogs. The main function of the sled is to carry the dead weight, the burdens of tent covers, blankets, food, and the like. The men run along with or behind the dogs, on snow-shoes, and when the dogs make better time than horses are able to, and will carry between 200 and 300 pounds over daily distances of from twenty to thirty-five miles, according to the condition of the ice or snow, and that many a journey of 1000 miles has been performed in this way, and some of 2000 miles, the test of human endurance is as great as that of canine grit.

Men travelling "light," with extra sleds for the freight, and men on short journeys often ride in the sleds, which in such cases are fitted up as "carioles" for the purpose. I have heard an unauthenticated account, by a Hudson Bay man, of men who drove themselves, disciplining refractory or lazy dogs by simply pulling them in beside or over the dash-board, and holding them down by the neck while they thrashed them. A story is told of a worthy bishop who complained of the

slow progress his sled was making, and was told that it was useless to complain, as the dogs would not work unless they were roundly and incessantly cursed.

performances of the drivers are the more wonderful. It was a white youth, son of a factor, who ran behind the bishop's dogs in the spurt of 40 miles by daylight that



HALT OF A YORK BOAT BRIGADE FOR THE NIGHT.

After a time the bishop gave his driver absolution for the profanity needed for the remainder of the journey, and thenceforth sped over the snow at a gallop, every stroke of the half-breed's long and cruel whip being sent home with a volley of wicked words, emphasized at times with peltings with sharp-edged bits of ice. Kane, the explorer, made an average of 57 miles a day behind these shaggy little brutes. Milton and Cheadle, in their book, mention instances where the dogs made 140 miles in less than 48 hours, and the Bishop of Rupert's Land told me he had covered 20 miles in a forenoon and 20 in the afternoon of the same day, without causing his dogs to exhibit evidence of fatigue. The best time is made on hard snow and ice, of course, and when the conditions suit, the drivers whip off their snow-shoes to trot behind the dogs more easily. In view of what they do, it is no wonder that many of the Northern Indians, upon first seeing horses, named them simply "big dog." But to me the per-

I mention. The men who do such work explain that the "lope" of the dogs is peculiarly suited to the dog-trot of a human being.

A picture of a factor on a round of his outposts, or of a chief factor racing through a great district, will now be intelligible. If he is riding, he fancies that princes and lords would envy him could they see his luxurious comfort. Fancy him in a dog-carriage of the best pattern—a little suggestive of a burial casket, to be sure, in its shape, but gaudily painted, and so full of soft warm furs that the man within is enveloped like a chrysalis in a cocoon. Perhaps there are Russian bells on the collars of the dogs, and their harness is "Frenchified" with bead-work and tassels. The air, which fans only his face, is crisp and invigorating, and before him the lake or stream over which he rides is a sheet of virgin snow—not nature's winding-sheet, as those who cannot love nature have said, but rather a robe of beautiful ermine fringed and embroidered with

dark evergreen, and that in turn flecked at every point with snow, as if bejewelled with pearls. If the factor chats with his driver, who falls behind at rough places to keep the sled from tipping over, their conversation is carried on at so high a tone as to startle the birds into flight, if there are any, and to shock the scene as by the greatest rudeness possible in that then vast silent land. If silence is kept, the factor reads the prints of game in the snow, of foxes' pads and deer hoofs, of wolf splotches, and the queer hieroglyphics of birds, or the dots and troughs of rabbit-trailing. To him these are as legible as the Morse alphabet to telegraphers, and as important as stock quotations to the pallid men of Wall Street.

Suddenly in the distance he sees a human figure. Time was that his predecessors would have stopped to discuss the situation and its dangers, for the sight of one Indian suggested the presence of more, and the question came, were these friendly or fierce? But now the sled hurries on. It is only an Indian or half-breed hunter minding his traps, of which he may have a sufficient number to give him a circuit of ten or more miles away from and back to his lodge or village. He is approached and hailed by the driver, and with some pretty name very often—one that may mean in English "hawk flying across the sky when the sun is setting," or "blazing sun," or whatever. On goes the sled, and perhaps a village is the next object of interest; not a village in our sense of the word, but now and then a tepee or a hut peeping above the brush beside the water, the eye being led to them by the signs of slothful disorder close by—the rotting canoe frame, the bones, the dirty tattered blankets, the twig-formed skeleton of a steam bath, such as Indians resort to when tired or sick or uncommonly dirty, the worn-out snowshoes hung on a tree, and the racks of frozen fish or dried meat here and there. A dog rushes down to the water-side, barking furiously—an Indian dog of the currish type of paupers' dogs the world around—and this stirs the village pack, and brings out the squaws, who are addressed, as the trapper up the stream was, by some poetic names, albeit poetic license is sometimes strained to form names not at all pretty to polite senses, "All Stomach" being that of one dusky princess, and serving to indicate the lengths to

which poesy may lead the untrammelled mind.

The sun sinks early, and if our traveller be journeying in the West and be a lover of nature, heaven send that his face be turned toward the sunset! Then, be the sky anything but completely storm-draped, he will see a sight so glorious that eloquence becomes a naked suppliant for alms beyond the gift of language when set to describe it. A few clouds are necessary to its perfection, and then they take on celestial dyes, and one sees, above the vanished sun, a blaze of golden yellow thinned into a tone that is luminous crystal. This is flanked by belts and breasts of salmon and ruby red, and all melt toward the zenith into a rose tone that has body at the base, but pales at top into a mere blush. This I have seen night after night on the lakes and the plains and on the mountains. But as the glory of it beckons the traveller ever toward itself, so the farther he follows, the more brilliant and gaudy will be his reward. Beyond the mountains the valleys and waters are more and more enriched, until, at the Pacific, even San Francisco's shabby sand hills stir poetry and reverence in the soul by their borrowed magnificence.

The travellers soon stop to camp for the night, and while the "breed" falls to at the laborious but quick and simple work, the factor either helps or smokes his pipe. A sight-seer or sportsman would have set his man to bobbing for jackfish or lake trout, or would have stopped awhile to bag a partridge, or might have bought whatever of this sort the trapper or Indian village boasted, but, ten to one, this meal would be of bacon and bread or dried meat, and perhaps some flapjacks, such as would bring coin to a doctor in the city, but which seem ethereal and delicious in the wilderness, particularly if made half an inch thick, saturated with grease, well browned, and eaten while at the temperature and consistency of molten lava.

The sled is pulled up by the bank, the ground is cleared for a fire, wood and brush are cut, and the deft laborer starts the flame in a tent-like pyramid of kindlings no higher or broader than a teacup. This tiny fire he spreads by adding fuel until he has constructed and led up to a conflagration of logs as thick as his thighs, cleverly planned with a backlog

and glowing fire-bed, and a sapling bent over the hottest part to hold a pendent kettle on its tip. The dogs will have needed disciplining long before this, and if the driver be like many of his kind, and works himself into a fury, he will not hesitate to seize one and send his teeth together through its hide after he has beaten it until he is tired. The point of order having thus been raised and carried, the shaggy, often handsome, animals will be minded to forget their private grudges and quarrels, and, seated on their haunches, with their intelligent faces toward the fire, will watch the cooking intently. The pocket knives or sheath knives of the men will be apt to be the only table implement in use at the meal. Canada had reached the possession of seigniorial mansions of great character before any other knife was brought to table, though the ladies used costly blades set in precious and beautiful handles. To-day the axe ranks the knife in the wilderness, but he who has a knife can make and furnish his own table—and his house also, for that matter.

Supper over, and a glass of grog having been put down, with water from the hole in the ice whence the liquid for the inevitable tea was gotten, the night's rest is begun. The method for this varies. As good men as ever walked have asked nothing more cozy than a snug warm trough in the snow and a blanket or a robe; but perhaps this traveller will call for a shake-down of balsam boughs, with all the furs out of the sled for his covering. If nicer yet, he may order a low hollow chamber of three sides of banked snow, and a superstructure of croched sticks and cross-poles, with canvas thrown over it. Every man to his quality, of course, and that of the servant calls for simply a blanket. With that he sleeps as soundly as if he were Santa Claus and only stirred once a year. Then will fall upon what seems the whole world the mighty hush of the wilderness, broken only occasionally by the hoot of an owl, the cry of a wolf, the deep thug of the straining ice on the lake, or the snoring of the men and dogs. But if the earth seems asleep, not so the sky. The magic shuttle of the aurora borealis is oftentimes at work up over that North country, sending its shifting lights weaving across the firmament with a tremulous brilliancy and energy we in this country get but

pale hints of when we see the phenomenon at all. Flashing and palpitating incessantly, the rose-tinted waves and luminous white bars leap across the sky or dart up and down it in manner so fantastic and so forceful, even despite their shadowy thinness, that travellers have fancied themselves deaf to some seraphic sound that they believed such commotion must produce.

An incident of this typical journey I am describing would, at more than one season, be a meeting with some band of Indians going to a post with furs for barter. Though the bulk of these hunters fetch their quarry in the spring and early summer, some may come at any time. The procession may be only that of a family or of the two or more families that live together or as neighbors. The man, if there is but one group, is certain to be stalking ahead, carrying nothing but his gun. Then come the women, laden like pack-horses. They may have a sled packed with the furs and drawn by a dog or two, and an extra dog may bear a balanced load on his back, but the squaw is certain to have a spine-warping burden of meat and a battered kettle and a pappoose, and whatever personal property of any and every sort she and her liege lord own. Children who can walk have to do so, but it sometimes happens that a baby a year and a half or two years old is on her back, while a new-born infant, swaddled in blanket stuff, and bagged and tied like a Bologna sausage, surmounts the load on the sled. A more tatterdemalion outfit than a band of these pauperized savages form it would be difficult to imagine. On the plains they will have horses dragging travois, dogs with travois, women and children loaded with impedimenta, a colt or two running loose, the lordly men riding free, straggling curs a plenty, babies in arms, babies swaddled, and toddlers afoot, and the whole battalion presenting at its exposed points exhibits of torn blankets, raw meat, distorted pots and pans, tent, poles, and rusty traps, in all eloquently suggestive of an eviction in the slums of a great city.

I speak thus of these people not willingly, but out of the necessity of truth-telling. The Indian east of the Rocky Mountains is to me the subject of an admiration which is the stronger the more nearly I find him as he was in his prime.

It is not his fault that most of his race have degenerated. It is not our fault that we have better uses for the continent than those to which he put it. But it is our fault that he is, as I have seen him, shivering in a cotton tepee full of holes, and turning around and around before a fire of wet wood to keep from freezing to death; furnished meat if he has been fierce enough to make us fear him, left to starve if he has been docile; taught, ay, forced to beg, mocked at by a religion he cannot understand, from the mouths of men who apparently will not understand him; debauched with rum, despoiled by the lust of white men in every form that lust can take. Ah, it is a sickening story. Not in Canada, do you say? Why, in the northern wilds of Canada are districts peopled by beggars who have been in such pitiful stress for food and covering that the Hudson Bay Company has kept them alive with advances of provisions and blankets winter after winter. They are Indians who in their strength never gave the government the concern it now fails to show for their weakness. The great fur company has thus added generosity to its long career of just dealing with these poor adult children; for it is a fact that though the company has made what profit it might, it has not, in a century at least, cheated the Indians, or made false representations to them, or lost their good-will and respect by any feature of its policy toward them. Its relation to them has been paternal, and they owe none of their degradation to it.

I have spoken of the visits of the natives to the posts. There are two other arrivals of great consequence—the coming of the supplies, and of the winter mail or packet. I have seen the provisions and trade goods being put up in bales in the great mercantile storehouse of the company in Winnipeg—a store like a combination of a Sixth Avenue ladies' bazar and one of our wholesale grocer's shops—and I have seen such weights of canned vegetables and canned plum-pudding and bottled ale and other luxuries that I am sure that in some posts there is good living on high days and holidays if not always. The stores are packed in parcels averaging sixty pounds (and sometimes one hundred), to make them convenient for handling on the portages—"for packing them over the carries," as our traders used to say. It is in following these sup-

plies that we become most keenly sensible of the changes time has wrought in the methods of the company. The day was, away back in the era of the Northwest Company, that the goods for the posts went up the Ottawa from Montreal in great canoes manned by hardy *voyageurs* in picturesque costumes, wielding scarlet paddles, and stirring the forests with their happy songs. The scene shifted, the companies blended, and the centre of the trade moved from old Fort William, close to where Port Arthur now is on Lake Superior, up to Winnipeg, on the Red River of the North. Then the Canadians and their cousins, the half-breeds, more picturesque than ever, and manning the great York boats of the Hudson Bay Company, swept in a long train through Lake Winnipeg to Norway House, and thence by a marvellous water route all the way to the Rockies and the Arctic, sending off freight for side districts at fixed points along the course. The main factories on this line, maintained as such for more than a century, bear names whose very mention stirs the blood of one who knows the romantic, picturesque, and poetic history and atmosphere of the old company when it was the landlord (in part, and in part monopolist) of a territory that cut into our Northwest and Alaska, and swept from Labrador to Vancouver Island. Northward and westward, by waters emptying into Hudson Bay, the brigade of great boats worked through a region embroidered with sheets and ways of water. The system that was next entered, and which bore more nearly due west, bends and bulges with lakes and straits like a ribbon all curved and knotted. Thus, at a great portage, the divide was reached and crossed; and so the waters flowing to the Arctic, and one—the Peace River—rising beyond the Rockies, were met and travelled. This was the way and the method until after the Canadian Pacific Railway was built, but now the Winnipeg route is of subordinate importance, and feeds only the region near the west side of Hudson Bay. The Northern supplies now go by rail from Calgary, in Alberta, over the plains by the new Edmonton railroad. From Edmonton the goods go by cart to Athabasca Landing, there to be laden on a steamboat, which takes them northward until some rapids are met, and avoided by the use of a singular combination of ba-

teaux and tramway rails. After a slow progress of fifteen miles another steamboat is met, and thence they follow the Athabasca, through Athabasca Lake, and so on up to a second rapids, on the Great Slave River this time, where oxen and carts carry them across a sixteen-mile portage to a screw steamer, which finishes the three-thousand-mile journey to the North. Of course the shorter branch routes, distributing the goods on either side of the main track, are still traversed by canoes and hardy fellows in the old way, but with shabby accessories of costume and spirit. These boatmen, when they come to a portage, produce their tomlines, and "pack" the goods to the next waterway. By means of these "lines" they carry great weights, resting on their backs, but supported from their skulls, over which the strong straps are passed.

The winter mail-packet, starting from Winnipeg in the depth of the season, goes to all the posts by dog train. The letters and papers are packed in great boxes and strapped to the sleds, beside or behind

which the drivers trot along, cracking their lashes and pelting and cursing the dogs. A more direct course than the old Lake Winnipeg way has usually been followed by this packet; but it is thought that the route *via* Edmonton and Athabasca Landing will serve better yet, so that another change may be made. This is a small exhibition as compared with the brigade that takes the supplies, or those others that come plashing down the streams and across the country with the furs every year. But only fancy how eagerly this solitary semiannual mail is waited for! It is a little speck on the snow-wrapped upper end of all North America. It cuts a tiny trail, and here and there lesser black dots move off from it to cut still slenderer threads, zigzagging to the side factories and lesser posts; but we may be sure that if human eyes could see so far, all those of the white men in all that vast tangled system of trading centres would be watching the little caravan, until at last each pair fell upon the expected missives from the throbbing world this side of the border.

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

BY HORATIO BRIDGE.

Third Paper.

XII.

IMMEDIATELY after General Pierce's election to the Presidency, in 1852, he offered Hawthorne the Liverpool consulate, an office then considered the most lucrative of all the foreign appointments in the Presidential gift, and soon after his inauguration he gave him that place.

In July, 1853, Hawthorne and his family sailed for England.

A few of his letters are here given, which speak of some of his annoyances at the prospect of his official emoluments being decreased by legislation, and of some other matters of public and private concern.

LIVERPOOL, *March 30, 1854.*

MY DEAR BRIDGE,—You are welcome home, and I heartily wish I could see Mrs. Bridge and yourself and little Marian by our English fireside.

I like my office well enough, but any official duties and obligations are irksome to me beyond expression. Nevertheless, the emoluments will be a sufficient inducement to keep

me here, though they are not above a quarter part what some people suppose them.

It sickens me to look back to America. I am sick to death of the continual fuss and tumult and excitement and bad blood which we keep up about political topics. If it were not for my children I should probably never return, but—after quitting office—should go to Italy, and live and die there. If Mrs. Bridge and you would go too, we might form a little colony amongst ourselves, and see our children grow up together. But it will never do to deprive them of their native land, which I hope will be a more comfortable and happy residence in their day than it has been in ours. In my opinion, we are the most miserable people on earth.

I wish you would send me the most minute particulars about Pierce—how he looks and behaves when you meet him, how his health and spirits are—and above all what the public really thinks of him—a point which I am utterly unable to get at through the newspapers. Give him my best regards, and ask him whether he finds his post any more comfortable than I prophesied it would be.

I have a great deal more to say, but defer it to future letters. Mrs. Hawthorne sends her



"HUSKIE" DOGS ON THE FROZEN HIGHWAY.