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MacKenzie Basin

Charles Mair



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Introduction The important events of A.D. 1857, and the negotiations which led to the Transfer of the Hudson's Bay Territories-Former Treaties and the Treaty Commission of 1899. THE terms upon which Canada obtained her great possessions in the West are generally known, and much has been written regarding the tentative steps by which, after long years of waiting, she acquired them. The distinctively prairie, or southern, portion of the country and its outliers, constituting "Prince Rupert's Land," had been claimed by the Hudson's Bay Company since May, 1670, as an absolute freehold. This and the North-West Territories, in which, under terminable lease from the Crown, the Company exercised, as in British Columbia, exclusive rights to trade only, were, as the reader knows, transferred to Canada by Imperial sanction at the same time. It is not the author's intention, therefore, to cumber his pages with trite or irrelevant matter; yet certain transactions which preceded this primordial and greatest treaty of all not unfittingly may be set forth, though in the briefest way, as a pardonable introduction to the following record. The year 1857 was an eventful one in the annals of "The North-West," the name by which the Territories were generally known in Canada.[*] [*]An important event in Red River was begot of the stirring incidents of this year, namely, the starting at Fort Garry, in December, 1859, by two gentlemen from Canada, Messrs. Buckingham and Caldwell, of the first newspaper printed in British territory east of British Columbia and west of Lake Superior. It was caHed the Nor'-Wester, but, having few advertisements, and only a limited circulation, the originators sold out to Dr. (afterwards Sir John) Schultz, who, at his own expense, published the paper, almost down to the Transfer, as an advocate of Canadian annexation, immigration and development

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