

anchored off Vancouver. Here we found that Sir George Simpson had arrived over-land from Canada, on a tour of inspection, and on his way to visit the Russian settlement at Sitka. The next morning we had a visit from him, accompanied by Dr. M'Laughlin, Mr. Douglass, Mr. Rowan, and Mr. Von Freeman, of the Russian Company.

Sir George Simpson left England the preceding month of March, and was to return thither by way of Kamtschatka: a journey which he hoped to perform in less than two years. He had seen much service while acting as an officer of the Hudson Bay Company, from which he has retired, and in which he now holds no share. Since his retirement, he is employed by the stockholders of the Company, as the inspector of all the departments, and to report upon the state of the trading posts; this leaves him free to act without prejudice.

The mode of apportioning the profits of the Company is as follows: after a certain per centage is paid to the stockholders who own the capital, the surplus is divided among the active partners, including the chief factor, traders, &c.: who are thus all interested in the profits arising from their own exertions. In order that Sir George Simpson may be impartial in adjusting and reporting on the affairs, he receives a salary of two thousands pounds a year. Sir George has been lately knighted, for projecting and superintending the outfits of the voyage of his nephew, who completed the discoveries in the north, and the history of whose melancholy end has become so well known to all interested in Arctic discoveries.

Captain Hudson, the officers, and myself, were invited to partake of a formal dinner at Vancouver: on this occasion, all the functionaries of the Company were present, and each individual seemed to have his place assigned him. It reminded me of the description of a feast of feudal times, for there were many "below the salt."

Like all great dinners, it was stiff and formal. Sir George Simpson occupied the head of the table, and there were none but men present. Their wives seem to be little thought of, but for what reason I could not imagine, as many of them were highly worthy of notice. Their frequent exertions in protecting the settlements and their husbands, show a devotion to them and their interests, that is highly commendable; and why they should not be treated as their equals, I am at a loss to conceive. They will bear an advantageous comparison with any others who have had so few opportunities. Those whom I saw exhibited both propriety of behaviour and modesty of deportment. It may perhaps be, that their seclusion from mixed society is their own choice; but such a regulation cannot but tend to prevent improvement, and retard advancement in civilization.