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## CHAPTER IX

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### SCOTSMEN IN THE "ASTOR COMPANY

**J**OHAN JACOB ASTOR, a German trader, of New York—the ancestor of the wealthy and celebrated family of the New York Astors of to-day—had a good eye for furs. Beginning trade in Montreal, he, after certain changes had been made in trading regulations, went to New York, but he had a liking for Canada and the fur trade which never left him. With varied success he dealt in furs in the American Fur Company at Mackinaw, and established the South-West Company and the Pacific Fur Company. But Astor with keen insight saw that the only men who could help him through with his larger enterprises were the Scottish traders of Montreal, and he had set his heart on beginning trade on the Pacific Coast at the mouth of the Columbia River.

In 1810 he proposed to the North-West Company of Montreal that they should take a one-third interest in the "Pacific Fur Company." The Nor'-Westers were, however, quietly working out in the same direction through the passes of the Rocky Mountains. They therefore declined his proposals, and immediately gave special orders to



















