

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

THE EARLY FUR TRADE

“To preserve the Ballance between us & the French is the great ruling Principle of the Modern Indian Politics.”¹

“The Indians frequently repeat that Trade was the foundation of their Alliance or Connexions with us & that it is the chief Cement w^{ch} binds us together. And this should undoubtedly be the first Principle of our whole System of Indian Politics.”²

The proper regulation of this trade Wraxall declares “is the only Method we have left to resist & overthrow the French influence among the Indians, in all other ways they are & will be our Superiors.”³ This is the theme of Wraxall’s *Abridgment* here printed — the Indian trade and the preservation of the balance against the French by means of it. Few subjects are more important in the history of colonial North America. But in no phase of that history is the discrepancy greater between the importance of the subject to contemporaries and the indifference to it of modern historians.

In estimating the significance of institutions and events of a period separated from our own by years of development and change, two different points of view are possible. One is the conscious or unconscious looking backward from the conditions and institutions of today, through the various stages through which these have developed. The other consists in placing ourselves at once in the mental attitude of the men of the past epoch we are trying to elucidate. What we shall see in an earlier epoch, or rather what we shall consider worthy of relating, will depend very largely upon which of these points of vantage we select. To illustrate from mediaeval English history: The chroniclers make

¹ *Post*, p. 219.

² *Post*, p. 153.

³ *Post*, p. 111.

very slight mention of Simon de Montfort's Parliament of 1265, with its first summons of representatives from the boroughs. To a contemporary, the calling up of a few such additional members to a factional assembly had no particular significance. For a modern student, however, who knows the later development of the House of Commons, such an event takes on a wholly different aspect and has an infinitely greater importance. It is clear that the historian must not be blind to either of these aspects of his materials. If he ignores the subsequent development of the institutions he treats of, and simply views them with the eyes of a contemporary, he becomes just what that contemporary too often was, a simple annalist, or what is worse, his modern analogue, a mere antiquary. On the other hand, just because he does know the subsequent history, the historian may be so vividly conscious of the vast possibilities of development contained in some embryonic institution, or the momentous results of some apparently unimportant event, that he will read into the minds of the unconscious contemporary all his own conscious enthusiasm. The results are likely to be only less disastrous than in the other case. For such a person Simon is likely to appear a conscious and calculating *Schöpfer des Hauses der Gemeinen*.

In the case of institutions or conditions which have not persisted to our day, the problem becomes more complicated. And here there is often peculiar danger of underestimating the importance of some institution or condition no longer existing which may have bulked very large in the eyes of contemporaries, influenced their actions, and moulded subsequent events; and of substituting for these something more familiar to ourselves. The forest laws in England are an instance, and in American history the Indian trade. By a modern historian, the Albany Congress of 1754, to take one instance, is usually regarded, and regarded rightly, as significant chiefly because it was part of a long development which culminated in our federal union. But for most of the men of 1754 themselves — whether Englishmen or colonials — the primary purpose was not so much union as common defence, Indian alliance, and the united control and regulation of the trade in furs. Union was necessary, but mainly as a means to these

ends. To forget the real importance of the development of colonial union in which this was an important stage would be fatal, but fortunately this has not been done. To ignore the fact that the direct aim of contemporaries was at something else than union is almost equally serious, and unfortunately it has frequently been done, and with disastrous results. The union has persisted, and we are not likely to overlook it. The fur trade has disappeared with the beaver and the Indians, and we are often in danger of forgetting its immense importance in that struggle which "ruined France in two continents, and blighted her as a colonial power"; which "gave England the control of the seas and the mastery of North America and India, made her the first of commercial nations, and prepared that vast colonial system that has planted new Englands in every quarter of the globe"; which¹ supplied to the United States the indispensable condition of their greatness, if not of their national existence."¹

"The influence of the Indians on the English colonies was two-fold," declares the late Dr. John A. Doyle. "The settler had to deal with them as neighbours, sometimes as friends, sometimes as possible converts to the fold of Christianity, and he had to deal with them as enemies. But it was in the latter character that the influence of the savage was mainly felt. Commerce with the Indians was unimportant; the efforts of missionaries among them were but passing episodes in the history of the colonies."² Such a statement is to me inexplicable. In some parts of the colonies, cut off by mountains or by intervening settlements, the trade may have been relatively insignificant at certain periods. In no province was this the case for the whole colonial period. For the colonies as a whole it was never true, and for the great central colonies facing the lakes and the Ohio valley it never had the semblance of truth. The contemporary evidence against it is overwhelming. To say that at most this Indian commerce was never more than a frontier trade will not be a very convincing argument for its lack of importance in our colonial and national development to any one who appreciates the fundamental and

¹ Parkman, *Montcalm and Wolfe*, Introduction.

² *Virginia, Maryland and the Carolinas*, 13.

continuing "Significance of the Frontier in American History."¹ From the very beginning of things English on this continent the great importance of Indian trade can be shown.

The chief early economic interests of Englishmen in America were in turn gold, fish, and furs. The interest in gold perforce soon disappeared. The fishing industry reached very large proportions at a very early date.² The transition from fishing to trading, though its history is obscure, was an easy one, and it occurred remarkably early.³ Before the Armada, Richard Whitbourne, primarily a fisherman, was sailing along our eastern coast "proposing there to trade then with the Savage people (for whom we carried sundry commodities) and to kill Whales."⁴

Thus in Mr. Biggar's phrase the "great fishing industry . . . in turn became the mother of the fur-trade."⁵ Evidences of

¹ *American Historical Association Reports*, 1893.

² The early references to it, both English and American, are very numerous. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, Englishmen were making frequent voyages to the Grand Banks. Privy Purse, Expenses of King Henry VII, *Excerpta Historica*, pp. 85 *et seq. passim*. By 1527, when John Rut made his voyage, the industry had become very important. Purchas (1625), Pt. iii, p. 809.

³ Biggar, *The Early Trading Companies of New France*, pp. 28-29.

⁴ *A Discourse and Discovery*, Preface. In the years following, it steadily increased. The author of *The Planter's Plea*, writing in 1630, declares that "it is well known, before our breach with Spain, we usually sent out to New England yearly, forty or fifty sail of ships of reasonable good burthen, for fishing only." *American Colonial Tracts*, Rochester, N. Y., ii, No. 3, p. 13. These figures are borne out by a letter written in 1578 and included in Hakluyt's *Voyages* (iii, p. 132). By the year 1605 the number of English ships had grown to 250, according to Sir Josiah Child, *A New Discourse of Trade*, Glasgow, 1751, p. 155. Probably the most interesting evidence is that of Richard Whitbourne, who, writing in 1622, describes many voyages in which he had taken part, the first more than forty years before. He reports that in 1615 there were engaged in fishing no fewer than 250 English ships employing more than 5000 men and bringing back cargoes which totalled £150,000 in value. *A Discourse Containing a Loving Invitation*, etc., London, 1622, pp. 19, 45. This he says was an average year. In 1621 it was asserted that the Newfoundland fisheries employed 300 ships with 10,000 British seamen, producing a customs revenue of nearly £10,000 a year. *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial, 1574-1660*, p. 25. See also Morton, *New English Canaan*, p. 86. Mr. McFarland's *History of the New England Fisheries* (1911) adds nothing to our knowledge of the early history.

⁵ *The Early Trading Companies of New France*, p. 17. It began very early. Verazzano, if his famous letter is genuine, had with him in 1524 "little bells and glasses, and many toys," certainly not for the amusement of his crew. *The Voyage*

the importance of this early Indian trade become more numerous as time goes on, and indicate a trade at once significant in amount and important in the eyes of contemporaries. The surprising thing in these records is the fact that, go back as far as we may, in the very earliest recorded voyages we find that the Indians had collected stores of skins in anticipation of trade with the Europeans, and that the voyagers in turn had invariably brought with them goods for this traffic — "Hookes, Knives, Sizzers, Hammers, Nails, Chissels, Fish-hookes, Bells, Beades, Bugles, Looking-glasses, Thimbles, Pinnes, Needles, Threed, and such like," as Purchas records of the voyage of Martin Pring to the New England coast in 1603.¹ More surprising still is the

of *Verrazzano*, by Henry C. Murphy. Appendix, p. 177. Cartier found when he first met the Indians of the mainland in 1534 that they were already perfectly accustomed to trade with Europeans in furs. *Early English and French Voyages*, ed. by H. S. Burrage, pp. 20, 21; cited also by Biggar, *Early Trading Companies*, p. 30. In 1545 Jean Alfonse found that the New England Indians had accumulations of furs evidently for trade with Europeans. Biggar, *op. cit.*, p. 31. Parkman cites a manuscript containing letters of Pedro Menendez to Philip II, which say that in 1565 and for some years previous bison skins were brought by the Indians from the upper Potomac along the coast to the Gulf of St. Lawrence. He estimated that 6000 skins were thus obtained in two years. *Pioneers of New France*, p. 230, note 4. In Gosnold's voyage to New England in 1602 the trade in furs is a prominent part. Brereton's *Briefe & True Relation*, *Early English and French Voyages*, ed. by H. S. Burrage, p. 337. According to *Rosier's Relation* of the voyage of Weymouth to the Kennebec in 1605 the Indians are told that "the intent of our coming to them to be for no other end" than the fur trade (Gorges Society), p. 113. Captain John Smith mentions his "ranging the Coast" of New England for trade in 1614, with the result that he "got for trifles neere eleven thousand Bever skinnes, one hundred Martins, as many Otters." Works, edited by E. Arber, p. 698. See also p. 715. Prince says that in 1621, ten or twelve ships from England traded on the New England coast for beaver, in 1622, thirty-five ships, in 1623, forty ships, and in 1624, fifty ships. *History of New England*, i, pp. 99, 117. John Smith reported in 1622, that "from Cannada and New England within these six yeares hath come neare 20,000 Bever skins." *New England's Trials*, 2d edn Works, p. 269. Many additional references might be given. Sixteenth century figures are not always to be implicitly trusted, but even with all allowances made, these remain sufficiently remarkable.

¹ Purchas (1625), Pt. iv, p. 1654. Sir Humphrey Gilbert's men in 1583 found in one hut in Newfoundland "above two hundred and fortie hides" which the Indians had collected. Hakluyt, iii, p. 175. The Indians on the Kennebec indicated to Weymouth that they "had great plenty of Fures" for trade. *Rosier's Relation* (Gorges Society), pp. 124-125, 126-127, 117. The fact that both Indians and Europeans were prepared for trade comes out in practically all the narratives of voyages to our eastern coast, even the earliest.

fact that as early as 1616 the Indians, in order to collect these stores of skins, had to penetrate the interior probably as far as the lakes.¹ It seems remarkable that the trade had developed to such a degree and had already covered so great an area before a single permanent English settlement had been made within the present United States north of the James River.

After settlements were made the story is the same. The records of the ill-starred Sagadahoc Colony are full of the subject.² With the coming of Plymouth settlers we might expect something else. Their motives in coming to America were mixed, but fishing was no small ingredient.³ In the beginning they knew nothing of the fur trade,⁴ but proved very apt learners, and this trade soon became one of the foundations of their prosperity, one of the chief means of lifting the financial burdens which threatened the little colony, and it is hardly too much to say one of the principal factors which enabled the struggling settlement to survive. But the Pilgrims were not the only settlers on the Massachusetts coast before the great migration to the Bay. Of the others one has left a most interesting account, which shows that he and his fellows were there for one purpose, and that the trade in furs.⁵

The leaders of the great Bay colony itself have left unmistakable evidence of the importance of the Indian trade to them and of their appreciation of it. Much of the jealousy which divided the New England colonies one from another, as well as their common opposition to external enemies which produced the New

¹ "For their Trade and Merchandize, to each of their principall families or habitations, they have divers Townes and people belonging, and by their relations and descriptions, more than twentie severall habitations and rivers that stretch themselves farre into the Countrey, even to the Borders of divers great Lakes, where they kill and take most of their Otters." John Smith, *General Historie of Virginia*, Works, p. 707.

² *The Sagadahoc Colony*, edited by H. O. Thayer (Gorges Society), pp. 43, 72, 89, 133 (1607).

³ See Weeden, *Economic and Social History of New England*, i, pp. 14-15, 88 et seq.; Prowse, *A History of Newfoundland*, pp. 17-18, 89.

⁴ Bradford, *History of Plimouth Plantation* (ed. of 1898), p. 130.

⁵ Thomas Morton, in his *New English Canaan*.

England Confederacy, is directly traceable to the fur trade, and the early extinction of the beaver in New England.¹

In the southern colonies we might, indeed, expect the trade to be "unimportant," but the records do not bear out that expectation.²

As the beaver country near the coast became exhausted, the conditions of the trade changed, and those colonies which had direct access to the lakes and the Mississippi valley acquired a virtual monopoly of the English trade. Thus New Jersey, which had once enjoyed a prosperous trade, was deprived of it by Pennsylvania, though Pennsylvania herself was for a half century or more at a disadvantage compared with New York, on account of the lack of water routes to the West; Virginia was handicapped in the same way, and New England saw herself, notwithstanding desperate efforts, cut off by the new English colony of New York from her share of the receding trade. The earlier Dutch, Swedish and English settlements along the coasts of the middle colonies had been made in large part on account of the fur trade, and had drawn much of their sustenance from it. The history of the fur trade in these early settlements is much the same as is found to the north and south of them.³ By the time of the consolidation of all these middle colonies in English hands, however, the beaver supply east of the Endless Mountains was practically exhausted, and all the furs came from the tributaries of the Mississippi or the lakes. From this time onward, therefore, the geographical position of Pennsylvania and New York made these colonies the centre of a trade which had reached proportions unheard of before in the English colonies, though the southernmost English colonies retained a fair share. Albany was far the best situated English town in America for this trade, and it enjoyed the largest part. But the tireless efforts of the Pennsylvania traders under far greater handicaps secured to them even in this period a trade which was great and growing. The

¹ For some account of the Indian trade in New England, and its importance there, see Note A at the end of this chapter, page xxviii.

² For the southern trade, see Note B at the end of this chapter, page xxxii.

³ Many evidences of the importance of the trade in these colonies are to be found in *N. Y. Col. Docs.*, xii, and elsewhere.

shifting of the field of the trade had consequences of the greatest international importance. It led to that competition for the interior, for its trade, and for alliances with its Indians, which plays so great a part in the great struggle of France and England for this continent, in many respects the most momentous struggle in our history.

Conrad Weiser reported to the Commissioners at Albany in 1754 that Pennsylvania traders had been going to the Allegheny for over thirty years, and the Indians admitted this.¹ Before the interruption caused by the Seven Years' War, Dr. William Clarke estimated the number of these traders from Pennsylvania at 300.² In 1730 it was reported from Canada "that in the country round Lake Erie the English are found scattered as far as the sea, trading with the Chaouenons, the Miamis and the Onyatanous."³ Many of these traders, no doubt, came from Albany, but Pennsylvania and Carolina were also represented. In the next few years their numbers and their success became a menace to the French posts at Detroit and elsewhere in the region, as is clearly indicated in the memoirs of the French commandants. Some drastic steps were seen to be necessary or the whole trade would be drawn away by the higher prices of the English traders. "The English have been coming For a Number Of years to corrupt the Savages Within the Sphere of This Post," wrote De Noyan from Detroit in 1741, "and I Have resolved to have them pillaged. I will Begin by sending Them a Summons."⁴

The increase of the English traders and their trade soon convinced the French that the trade of the whole interior, and with it all their Indian alliances and their very existence there were in the gravest danger. Nothing less than the complete with-

¹ *N. Y. Col. Docs.*, vi, pp. 872, 876.

² *Observations on the Late and Present Conduct of the French* (London, 1755), p. 10. In 1747 M. Vaudreuil wrote a letter, speaking of the Ohio—"où les Anglois ont d'anciens Etablissemens & où ils ont de Magazins depuis long tems." *Chatham Papers* (MSS. in P. R. O.), xcv, No. 13. A great number of references to the trade are to be found in the *Pennsylvania Colonial Records and Archives*.

³ *Mich. Pioneer Hist. Colls.*, xxxiv, pp. 75-76.

⁴ De Noyan to the Minister, August 24, 1741, *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, xvii, p. 358.

drawal of all English traders from the western country could avert it.¹ But the western country was now the sole source of the fur supply, and a withdrawal was impossible and never considered for a moment. For fifteen years or more before Washington's skirmish on the Chestnut Ridge, it was evident that this competition for the trade and alliances of the interior must soon result in actual war, and for much of that time the "pillaging" of traders was little better than war. Again and again the Indians were ordered by the French "to extirpate all English traders" west of the mountains.² In many cases these orders were carried out. In 1751 Jonquière had four English traders seized near the Ohio and sent prisoners to Canada.³ The place most hated was the English trading post of Pickawillany on the Miami River, which by 1751 had become "one of the greatest Indian towns of the West, the center of English trade and influence, and a capital object of French jealousy," a town of some two thousand people, with a fortified trading house where sometimes as many as fifty English traders could be found at one time.⁴ No other place save Oswego was so hated by the French. It must be destroyed or French influence was gone in the whole interior. The dispatches of Joncaire, and the journal of Céloron, show that the cheaper goods of the English had already had their effect. It is no wonder that the first open blow fell on Pickawillany. The Seven Years' War is usually said to have been begun in 1754, with the skirmish of Washington and Jumonville on the Chestnut Ridge. It had become inevitable long before. The contest for the interior had been a covert war for years. There is much reason in the contention of George Chalmers that

¹ Raymond to the Minister, *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, xvii, pp. 474-477.

² *Chatham Papers* (MSS. in P. R. O.), xcv, No. 13. In 1749 such orders were given, and many were killed. In 1751 and 1752 orders were again given by Vaudreuil for the extirpation of the English in the Illinois country, on La Belle Rivière, the Cherokee River, and elsewhere. See the journal of Christopher Gist, pp. 1750-1751, edited by William M. Darlington (Pittsburgh, 1893), pp. 34-35, 37, 38, 40, 44, 45.

³ Parkman, *Conspiracy of Pontiac*, i, p. 72. See *Gist's Journal* (ed. Darlington), pp. 44-45.

⁴ Moreau, *A Memorial*, etc., p. 62; *Gist's Journal*, edited by Darlington, pp. 47-48; Parkman, *Montcalm and Wolfe*, i, pp. 52-56, 82-83.

that war really began at Pickawillany in 1752.¹ In the beginning it was a war of trade, and when it became something more, the chief brunt first fell on traders, not settlers.²

The remarkable answers of Franklin in 1766, to the questions of the Commons' Committee on these points cannot be ignored, — "As to the Ohio, the contest there began about your right of trading in the Indian country, a right you had by the treaty of Utrecht, which the French infringed; they seized the traders and their goods, which were your manufactures; they took a fort which a company of your merchants, and their factors, and correspondents, had erected there to secure that trade. Braddock was sent with an army to retake that fort (which was looked on here as another encroachment on the King's territory), and to protect your trade. It was not till after his defeat, that the Colonies were attacked. They were before in perfect peace with both French and Indians; the troops were not, therefore, sent for their defence. . . . The Indian trade is a British interest; it is carried on with British manufactures, for the profit of British merchants and manufacturers, therefore the war, as it commenced for the defence of territories of the Crown the property of no American and for the defence of a trade purely British, was really a British war."³ Allowance must be made for such statements urged as an argument for the repeal of the Stamp Act, but there is much truth in them nevertheless. It is true that the struggle for the interior — "essentially a competition for the fur trade," as Parkman truly styles it — had developed into a mighty armed conflict for a continent. But its beginnings are here stated truly. Clearly it was not alone intercolonial jealousy, nor inconsistent claims to territory, nor Quaker indifference — bad as that was, that kept the colonies and their assemblies from entering the contest with more enthusiasm. Some recent statements on these points must be revised.⁴ Justin

¹ *History of the Revolt of the American Colonies*, ii, pp. 263-264.

² Doddridge in his *Notes* says that in Pontiac's Conspiracy the fury of the Indians first fell upon the traders, of whom nearly 120 were killed (p. 217).

³ *The Writings of Benjamin Franklin* (Smyth's ed.), iv, p. 439.

⁴ So far as this was a struggle between England and France, it was a struggle which began in the west to control the trade. This explains in large measure the

Winsor's view that Pennsylvania's share in this trade west of the mountains was considerable and constantly increasing during the

apathy of the colonies. But it does not wholly account for the attitude of the Indians on the Ohio. One great reason why they consented to take up the hatchet against the English undoubtedly was that they feared the encroachment of English settlers who would drive them from their hunting grounds. This the French never ceased to impress upon the Indians. Céloron in 1749 urged it at every conference. The argument was both true and eventually effective. In 1751 Christopher Gist found the Delawares of Ohio all favorable to the English, and also the Shawnees and the Twightwees or Miamis, the most numerous and powerful tribe in that country. *Gist's Journal*, in Pownall's *Topographical Description*, Appendix, pp. 10-11; in Darlington's edition *passim*. Certainly Céloron in 1749 found them anything but friendly to the French. Journal in *Catholic Historical Researches*, ii and iii *passim*. By 1754 all this was strikingly changed. The Indians were impressed by the energy of the French and the inactivity of the English. The destruction of Pickawillany was undoubtedly very effective also. Such acts accompanied by the fear instilled by the French that the English settlers would drive them from their hunting grounds finally turned the Indians to the French side. The arguments of the French were rendered convincing to Delawares and Shawnees by their own earlier experience of the English settlers in the Juniata Valley, and they were corroborated by the very English traders themselves, rival traders often asserting to the Indians with incredible fatuity that their competitors were only land agents in disguise. "We are told," says a writer in 1755,¹⁴ that the present *French* invasion had its rise from the *Ohio* company's building the store-house at *Will's Creek*. For the *Indian* trade, which before was carried on with *Pensylvania* by the river *Susquehanna*, was by means of that store-house and a waggon-road, opened thro' the country, carried into *Virginia* by way of the *Potomak*: that the *Pensylvania* traders considering this as an injury done to them, in revenge infused jealousies into the minds of the *Indians*, that the *English* were going clandestinely to seize their lands: that the clamor among the *Indians* alarmed the *French*: and that the building the fort on the *Ohio* confirming the information which they had received of the grant, they in resentment joined with the *French* to defeat the *English* designs. This is the account given by some who were acquainted with the whole transaction." *State of the British and French Colonies*, p. 115. The explanation here given is absurd, for we know the Indians repeatedly begged the English to build forts in the neighborhood, but the facts are no doubt in large part truly stated. Withers in his *Chronicles of Border Warfare* says, "French influence, united to the known jealousy of the Natives, would have been unavailingly exerted to array the Indians against Virginia, at the commencement of Braddock's war, but for the proceedings of the Ohio company, and the fact that the Pennsylvania traders represented the object of that association to be purely territorial." (Thwaites's ed., pp. 147-148.) To these causes of the Indian defection must be added another, however, — the character of the English traders, "the most abandon'd Wretches in the World," as Dinwiddie called them. Dinwiddie's Records, *Va. Hist. Soc. Coll.*, n. s., iv, p. 340. He even charges them with being French spies, and Christian Frederick Post believed they were. The Indians on the Ohio reported to Post in 1758 that they had been informed by "one of our greatest Traders, and some Justices of the Peace," that "the *English*

first half of the eighteenth century¹ seems better supported by

intend to destroy us and take our Lands.'H' Post's Journal in Thomson's *Enquiry*, pp. 153, 161. To such statements Post replied "My Brothers, I know you have been wrongly persuaded by many wicked People; for you must know, there are a great many Papists in the Country in *French* Interest, who appear like Gentlemen, and have sent many runaway *Irish* Papists Servants among you, who have put bad Notions into your Heads, and strengthened you against your Brothers the *English*." *Ibid.*, p. 156. See also p. 162 for another statement to the same effect. Thomson in a note to this speech adds: "The *Indian* Traders used to buy the transported *Irish* and other Convicts as Servants, to be employed in carrying up the Goods among the *Indians*: Many of those ran away from their Masters and joined the *Indians*. The ill Behaviour of these People has always hurt the Character of the *English* among the *Indians*." *Enquiry*, p. 156, note. It is possible that the unscrupulous methods of rival traders of the lowest character, many of whom were undoubtedly Irishmen, when reported by the Indians, gave rise to Post's belief that these men were really in the French pay. It seems much more probable, however, that cupidity rather than religion, was the motive behind the actions of such ex-convicts, and "abandoned wretches." The annals of the fur trade at all times and in all places are full of the unspeakable methods of these creatures, and all contemporary writers ascribe the hatred of the Indians for the white man to the abuses practised by them. The English had a little more than their share of such characters among their traders, and Pennsylvania probably had her full proportion of these. The opportunities of the trade, carried on as it was with a semi-barbarous race naturally attracted such characters, as such work always does. The early Spanish treatment of the Indians in the islands of the Gulf of Mexico is similar, and unfortunately we have no lack of parallels even today in the mad hunt for rubber, which in some ways strongly resembles the earlier fur trade, and like it sets off the white man's cupidity against the savage's ignorance, with a resulting cruelty and fatuity that seem very familiar to any one who has read the annals of our early fur traders. It seems probable, however, that the circulation among the Indians of Western Pennsylvania and Ohio of stories that English traders were land agents in disguise was induced merely by a desire on the part of individual English traders to injure others, an effective argument, and heightened always, of course, by the continued insistence on the same point by the French. English traders by such action might easily render themselves open to such suspicion as Post's and Thomson's, that they were really French emissaries, but their motives it seems to me are better to be explained by the unscrupulous methods of the trade. In 1774 Lord Dunmore complained: "The Traders in General are composed of the most worthless Subjects, such as fail in all other occupations, and become in a manner outcasts of Society. These Men, we have full proof, have made it their constant business to discredit the Virginians (who lye much more convenient for carrying on a Trade with these Indians than the Pennsylvanians) and make the Indians consider them in the most odious light." *Documentary History of Dunmore's War*, ed. by Thwaites and Kellogg, p. 391.

For much information on the Pennsylvania trade, see *The Wilderness Trail*, by Charles A. Hanna (1911), esp. ii, chapter ix.

¹ *The Mississippi Basin*, chapter xiv. In 1774 Lord Dunmore wrote to the

the contemporary evidence of the latter part of that period than Parkman's opinion that the English trade practically all went to Albany.¹ Mr. Beer's contention that the English trade as a whole at this time was losing in proportion to the French is based on alarmist English statements that the French were "engrossing" the trade.² Such statements are to be found at all periods, but the even more numerous and more pessimistic reports of the French commandants at all the posts show, I think, that the reverse was true.³ It was the fashion among earlier historians of this period to ascribe all this rivalry to a competition for territory, a hunger for land, and this is unfortunately still done. Contemporary documents show that, so far as the English government was concerned, this is a mistake. It was trade rather than land. Some recent writers, however, in their reaction from this erroneous view, have, it is to be feared, somewhat underestimated the importance of settlement in its influence on French and English rivalry, especially in certain parts of the country.⁴ In New York, it is true, Indian relations at this time and Indian trade are practically convertible terms, and New York was far more important in this respect than any other colony. It was a colony with only a small farming population, in which the westward movement began at a relatively late date. The Indians there were not driven from their homes by the glacial movement of a numerous and expanding community. But compare these conditions with those of Pennsylvania at this time, and for some time after. There the agricultural land was smaller in area and the population was larger. The rich broad valleys of the east

Earl of Dartmouth, "The trade carried on with the Ohio Indians has been almost engrossed by the Province of Pennsylvania." *The Documentary History of Dunmore's War*, p. 391.

¹ *Half Century of Conflict*, i, p. 263.

² *The Commercial Policy of England toward the American Colonies* (Columbia Studies in History, Economics and Public Law, iii, No. 2), pp. 61-62.

³ For example, a letter from Raudot, Jr., in 1708 "Detroit has brought the savages only too near the English. Almost all the beaver skins produced go to Orange, and we see hardly any here from that post." *Mich. Pioneer and Hist. Colls.*, xxxiii, p. 395. If the English had not been cutting into the French trade in the Ohio valley, the Seven Years' War would hardly have broken out there.

⁴ E.g., Mr. Alden's *New Governments West of the Alleghanies Before 1780*, Madison, Wisconsin (1897).

were already occupied, while new masses of hardy agriculturists were rapidly pouring in from Ulster and elsewhere. There was no place to go but the frontier, and very soon they began to encroach on the lovely hunting grounds of the Juniata Valley and beyond. It is significant that while the Tuscaroras were added to the Iroquois in New York, the Delawares and Shawnees were pushed beyond the mountains in Pennsylvania. It was no accident that the tribes on the Ohio took the side of France in the Seven Years' War, and it was not the superiority of the French traders alone that made them do so. Those Indians after much wavering then allied themselves with the nation whose settlements never threatened their hunting grounds. In the Revolution, it was not mainly the abuses of trade which ranged the Indians against the Americans, as Lecky says,¹ important as those undoubtedly were; in fact many of the traders were not Americans. It was chiefly against the encroaching settler that they fought, and he was an American, while the policy of the home government always aimed at the trade. The clashing of these interests had much to do also with colonial disaffection in some places. The fact has been noted that certain religious bodies were almost entirely on the side of independence, while others were much less so.² It is not without significance that the Presbyterian body had so much of its strength in a country where the trading policy of the home government prevented the agricultural occupation of the land. The statement of Professor Turner is admirable "The American colonists came to know that the land was worth more than the beaver that built in the streams, but the mother country fought for the Northwest as the field of Indian trade in all the wars from 1689 to 1812."³ In some parts of the country they came to know it, perforce, earlier than in others, and Pennsylvania was one of the earliest. So soon as they did, a feeling of opposition to the trading policy of the English government was inevitable. It certainly existed

¹ *History of England in the Eighteenth Century* (Am. ed.), iii, p. 321.

² *E. g.*, by W. E. Dodd, in *American Historical Review*, xviii, pp. 522 *et seq.*

³ *The Indian Trade of Wisconsin*, p. 70. (*Johns Hopkins University Studies*, 9th Series, vols. 11-12.)

before the Seven Years' War, and Franklin's celebrated statement in 1766 is inexplicable except in light of it. After the war the policy was the same. Bouquet at Fort Pitt refused to allow the occupation of the land.¹ The celebrated Proclamation of 1763 is an outgrowth of it.² That can only be understood if we remember *both* the government's policy and the steady extension of the settlements. The letters, printed and unprinted, of Sir William Johnson at this critical period, the letters of George Croghan, the Minutes of the Indian treaties, the Pennsylvania *Colonial Records*, are all full of this "irrepressible conflict." The land cession of 1754, the treaty of Easton and other treaties are due to it. The Indian line of 1768, is an expedient to prevent a recurrence of disturbances like Pontiac's Conspiracy.³ Dunmore's War⁴ and the frontier part of the Revolution⁵ are all influenced by this clash of policies and interests. Any one who looks carefully at the location of the Indian line of 1768 will see there graphically represented the essential difference between New York and the lands south of it. The problems were wholly different. In the north it was trade and its abuses and their regulation; in the south it was trade *versus* land. The second of these problems was the more serious because it was ultimately soluble in one way only — by the complete victory of the settler. But to admit this to the Indian was to lose his influence everywhere. It was the most difficult of all Johnson's problems, and there is evidence that he saw both sides of it, and comprehended its enormous difficulty and its great importance. Naturally as Indian superintendent, his inclinations lay on the side of trade, as he was a part of the machinery of a government which looked to that side almost exclusively.⁶ It is certainly

¹ *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1889, pp. 72-77.

² C. W. Alvord, *Genesis of the Proclamation of 1763*; C. E. Carter, *Great Britain and the Illinois Country*, especially chs. 2 and 6; G. H. Alden, *New Governments West of the Alleghanies Before 1780*, ch. 3; Victor Coffin, *The Province of Quebec and the Early American Revolution*, ch. 6.

³ C. W. Alvord, *The British Ministry and the Treaty of Fort Stanwix, Wisconsin Historical Society Proceedings*, 1908, pp. 165 *et seq.*

⁴ *The Documentary History of Dunmore's War*, Introduction.

⁵ Thwaites and Kellogg, *The Revolution on the Upper Ohio* (Madison, 1908).

⁶ *American Historical Association Reports*, 1894, p. 427. Shelburne declared in

true, as Professor Turner has shown, that the proposals of Vergennes at the time of the Treaty of Paris in 1783 were dictated by his desire for the Indian trade, and that Shelburne's concession can be understood only in the light of it,¹ and Professor McLaughlin's contention is indisputable, that the sole aim of Great Britain in retaining posts in the interior was this trade.²

1775, "The peltry or skin trade is a matter which I presume to affirm is of the last importance to the trade and commerce of the colonies and this country. The regulation of this business has cost His Majesty's ministers more time and trouble than any one matter I know of." *Parliamentary History*, xviii, 673, quoted by Coffin, *The Province of Quebec*, p. 407, note 2.

"The student of the period [about 1763] knows well that with the word *Indian* must be read the additional term '*Indian trade*,' and that with this addition the Indian question assumed an important place in the general colonial trade system," Coffin, *op. cit.*, p. 407.

¹ *The Indian Trade of Wisconsin*, p. 45.

² *American Historical Association Reports*, 1894, pp. 413 *et seq.* Many letters showing the attitude of Johnson and others toward the questions of trade and settlement written by Croghan, Gage, Colden, Hillsborough and others to Johnson, and his letters to them, are to be found in volume ii, of O'Callaghan's *Documentary History of New York*, and in the *New York Colonial Documents*, vols. vii and viii. The following extracts from letters now or formerly in the *Johnson MSS.*, illustrate the same points: "The Lower order of people settled about the frontiers imagining I presume that they had nothing to apprehend since the removal of our European Enemys, began by Overreaching and defrauding the Indians, they proceed to personal Insults and Murders in time of peace, under pretence of Retaliation for Injuries sustained during the heat of a furious War, — Many unjust practices were made use of in different Quarters to deprive them of their properties, and a Number of persons in defiance of Justice & policy, & contrary to the Express Orders of Government established themselves on the Ind^a Lands within & about the Frontiers of Pennsylvania & cet and altho' many Steps were taken for their removal they have hitherto proved ineffectual. — In the Mean time the Indians irritated at the Murders committed on the frontiers, at the Insults their parties repeatedly met with, the Ill treatment of the Tuscaroras who were called to Joyn them from Carolina, & the barbarity Exercised on the Unhappy Conestoga Indians, as well as the Unjustifiable Settlements formed within their Country without the Least colour of right, unless the Seduction of a few Drunken Delawares whose Nation have no pretensions thereto can be admitted as such, began to consider amongst themselves what was best to be done, and from an Apprehension that such Conduct would not have been permitted by us who are Governed by Laws, unless we intended to put in practice a plan for Surrounding and Destroying them of which they have been long Suspicious, and which they are still taught to believe by many interested French among them. They resolved to commit Acts of hostility & by beginning a War against us to Check those Settlements of which they became apprehensive." From a letter dated January 22, 1768, from Sir William Johnson

While settlement had been pushing its slow but certain way across the mountains to the Ohio, Indian trade had spread over

to Joseph Galloway, speaker of the Pennsylvania Assembly. *Johnson MSS.*, xv, p. 240.

"By my Letter from the Secy of State by the last packet I find that his Majesty declines to the large Cession of that part of Ohio extending to the Cherokee River, & would have it given up to the Ind^s, as a proof of his regard, for my part I could not foresee any ill consequences or impropriety in getting from the Northern Nations all their Claims in that Quarter. If it had never been done the Virginians would nevertheless have pushed settlements there, at present I must manage the affair the best way I can, by making the Surrender of that part of the Cession the effect of his Majestys regard for their interests, but should the Virginians after it is declined by the Crown, begin Settlements upon it the Indians will think Strangely of the Affair & it may create trouble." From a letter of Sir William Johnson to General Gage, dated March 22, 1769. *Johnson MSS.*, xvii, p. 101.

"I am favored with your Letter of the third Instant and am entirely of your opinion as to the conduct which may be expected from the frontier Inhabitants particularly the Virginians — I was sensible that they were about to push Settlements & would do so in Virtue of their old Claim That of the Cherokees I had great reason to think could not be made out, but in case one Set of Indians were to be dis-obliged, I judged it least dangerous that it Sho^d be them than the Northern Indians who are more capable of showing their resentment, & more inclined to do so, besides I thought that whatever pretensions the former might now have, it could easily be settled to their Satisfaction. I am very Sensible that the Frontier people will meet with but too much encouragement from persons in the provinces, and that whatever Laws are made will fail in the Execution for reasons that are obvious, but I am at present most concerned as to the additional Cession from the Orders I have to acquaint the Indians in the best manner I can that his Majesty declines it thro' regard for their interest, after which if Settlements are nevertheless made on it I leave you to Judge of what may be the Consequences with regard to the Indians. I should therefore be glad to have your opinion whether under these Circumstances (with which the Government may not be acquainted) it is safe, till we hear farther, to Signify to them his Majesty's declining it to the Indians." From a letter dated April 14, 1769, from Sir William Johnson to General Gage, *Johnson MSS.*, xvii, p. 122.

"I thought, & so did every body that the Cession should be as Extensive as possible, & I believe it is almost needless to say that the more we get Voluntarily from them the Less danger there would be of disputes about Settlements, & the farther they would be removed. The back Inhabitants particularly of Virginia, I well knew were not to be prevented from extending their settlements into the Indian Country, had the Treaty never taken place, the danger in which such a procedure must Involve the frontiers, could only be prevented by the purchase of that Country, but this was not all, Virginia Claimed it in Virtue of an Old purchase under the sanction of the Crown, and the only objection his Majesty made to it in his Orders to me, were founded on a Supposition that it was claimed by, & would occasion disputes with the Cherokees, as I knew that this was not the Case. . . . I know my Conduct therein to be irreproachable, & not only for the best, but actually was the

half the continent. Its most important characteristic from the international point of view was the enormous area necessary for it. This was true from its very beginning, as we have seen.¹ The fur trade was in fact America's "conservation" problem in the eighteenth century. It is interesting to note how many points of similarity there are between our own conditions and this trade, with the rules for its regulation and the evasion of them. Questions of monopoly, of government licenses, geographical allotment, the struggle between advocates of a centralized or decentralized control, and many others, have a very

best that could have been done at that time, and where I took such Extraordinary pains both Night & Day for effecting so difficult & Important a business I cannot but think it hard should the Government omit doing Justice to my proceedings, of the propriety of which I think Myself a Competent Judge." From a letter of Sir William Johnson to General Gage, dated August 9, 1769. *Johnson MSS.*, xvii, p. 227.

Johnson considered as equally mistaken the policy of the government in handing back to the several provincial governments the control of the Indian trade. On July 20, 1768, he wrote to Sir Henry Moore:

"Before my return I received Sundry dispatches from the Sec^y of State, & amongst them a Report of the board of Trade of which doubtless you have a Copy, with an Arrangement which I apprehend proceeded from the representation of the inutilty of Commiss^{rs} of Trade (according to the plan of the board when Lord Hillsboro' presided at it) from its being in some respects impracticable to Establish them in such a manner as would have Answered the end of their Institution. The Management of the Trade is therefore committed to the Colonies from an Expectation that they have profited by the Experience of former Misconduct which seems to be well known to Government, and which I heartily wish may no longer Exist.

"As I shall carefully avoid invading a province Committed to others I flatter myself there will be no danger of any Interfering or Clashing of Authority, the Concern of Trade being entirely Separated from the Powers & Duties of the Super Intendent over Indian Affairs & Transactions which are distinct in their Nature, and under such peculiar circumstances as to be only executed by an Officer on the part of the Crown on one Uniform & General System according to the repeated Sense of Government. Whatever Matters require the Provinces to be consulted it shall be done, and as in these & all other particulars I never did, nor ever shall Lose sight of the General Intention of my Appointment, so I shall direct my Care, Influence & Experience to the General Good at the same time that I shall be always happy in Serving the Interests of this Province." *Johnson MSS.*, xvi, p. 113.

¹ *Ante*, p. xiv. In 1684 the Indian orator whom Colden, following La Hontan, calls Garangula, says the Five Nations had made war on the western Indians because "They have hunted Bevers on our Lands: They have acted contrary to the Customs of all Indians; for they left none of the Bevers alive, they killed both Male and Female." Colden (1902), i, p. 69. See also Pownall, *Administration of the Colonies* (4th ed.), p. 260.

familiar look; but the beaver steadily disappeared. A careful study of the whole fur trade from this and other economic aspects is a *desideratum*.

Had there been real 'conservation' of the beaver, and effective regulation of the trade in furs, the area necessary would have extended rapidly, but when to the ordinary economic demand was added the fact that trade was also a means of political alliance with the Indian tribes and almost a weapon of international warfare, the extension became a political object to be attained at all hazards. The object was to get the trade; it made less difference whether the furs were needed or not. In the earlier days they were not always all needed, and we find the French company in Canada burning thousands of skins to prevent a glut of the market.¹ No wonder the beaver had to be pursued to the ends of the earth.

Not merely international policy, but also individual rivalry tended to the same result. In the English provinces it was province against province, leading them to pass severe laws against interlopers. In a single province it was individual competition of the cut-throat variety, as vividly illustrated at Albany² and everywhere else. In Canada a monopoly existed theoretically, but in practice almost the whole male population, including the very priests and the government officials, drew their living from a continuous and wholesale evasion of the rules of the company and the laws of the colony and the mother country intended to limit the trade.³ Such methods of competition, such

¹ The French hat-makers, in whose interest Canada was exploited at the opening of the eighteenth century, refused to accept more skins than they needed; the Canadian company, on the other hand, were not permitted by the government either to refuse skins when offered by the Indians or to pay a price low enough to turn the supply to Albany. The Company was required to buy at a fixed price all the skins offered, and then destroy them in the presence of an officer of the government. The Company soon became bankrupt, of course, and the effect in augmenting the illicit trade and the extinction of the beaver may be imagined. Ferland, *Cours d'Histoire du Canada*, ii, pp. 413-415. *Report on Canadian Archives*, Supp. 1899, p. 141.

² *Post*, p. liii.

³ "All that was most active and vigorous in the colony took to the woods . . . and more than once the colony presented the extraordinary spectacle of the greater part of its young men turned into forest outlaws. . . . Neither threats nor blan-

eagerness to "engross the trade" have never been seen on this continent since. The extinction of the beaver, and the consequent rapid extension of the field of trade inevitably followed. This naturally led, for one thing, to a centralized regulation of the trade after the Seven Years' War. But so long as both England and France were here it was this very competition which so vastly enlarged the designs and counter designs of the two contending powers, and it also had no little part in extending the actual field of military operations whenever their contention reached the stage of open war.

dishments were of much avail. We hear of seigniories abandoned; farms turning again into forests; wives and children left in destitution." Parkman, *Old Régime*, pp. 359-360. Edict after edict was issued without avail (e. g., *Edits et Ordonnances*, i, p. 75). The very officers who were to execute these laws often had an interest in the forbidden traffic (cf. *Report on Canadian Archives*, Supp. 1899, p. 122). Besides, legally or illegally, these outlaws had the fur trade largely in their hands, and if forced by too severe measures to take their furs to the English, Canada might be lost to France. Hence the statutes alternated between strictest severity and complete pardon (e.g., *Edits et Ordonnances*, i, p. 330), with the result that the offenders usually remained away in the woods for years at a time, knowing that the edicts against them would eventually be followed by an amnesty, Parkman, *Old Régime*, p. 360. But notwithstanding such measures of reconciliation many of the furs of these adventurers found their way to Albany. See a *Mémoire* of Bégon of September 20, 1713 in *Wisconsin Historical Collection*, xvi, pp. 295 *et seq.* There are many others like it.

NOTE A. (To page xv.)

THE FUR TRADE IN NEW ENGLAND

As early as September, 1621, the Plymouth settlers made an expedition to Massachusetts Bay, "and brought home a good quantity of beaver." Bradford, *History of Plimouth Plantation* (1898), p. 126; *Mourt's Relation*, Arber, *The Story of the Pilgrim Fathers*, p. 483. They promised the Indians to come again. Winslow, *Good News from New England*, Arber, *op. cit.*, p. 521. This they were enabled to do by buying Indian goods in 1622 from a ship which had come to trade (Bradford, p. 153), and "had good store of trade." Winslow, *Good News from New England*, Arber, *op. cit.*, pp. 521, 526. The same author wrote, "Much might be spoken of the benefit that may come to such as shall here plant, by trade with the Indians for furs; if men take a right course for obtaining the same. For I dare presume, upon that small experience I have had, to affirm, that the English, Dutch, and French return yearly many thousand pounds profits by trade only, from that island on which we are seated." *Ibid.*, p. 595.

In 1623 Thomas Weston came from Wessagussett on Massachusetts Bay to Plymouth, asking for help. He was answered that "they had not much beaver, & if they should let him have it, it were enoughe to make a mutinie among y^e people,

seeing ther was no other means to procure them foode which they so much wanted, & cloaths allso.^d They promised, however, to help him secretly, ande^e let him have 100 beaver-skins, which waighed 190^{ti}. odd pounds." Bradford, p. 161. In 1625 an expedition to the Kennebec resulted in their getting "700^{ti}. of beaver, besids some other furs," and they sent to England that year 800 weight of beaver besides other furs. *Ibid.*, pp. 244, 246-247. In 1626 the Plymouth people bought from European traders at Monhegan Indian goods amounting to £400, and had great success in trading with them. *Ibid.*, pp. 251-252. The colony was poor and was heavily mortgaged to the company. Without the fur trade it would hardly have been possible for the settlers to pay their debt to the company. One thing that made this harder was the difficulty in getting goods for the Indian trade. Some were had from passing ships, at high prices, or from vessels trading along the Maine coast, but the scarcity of goods alone prevented the Indian trade from assuming large proportions. In 1627 this was in part remedied. The Dutch at New York wrote to Plymouth, desiring to exchange their Indian goods for New England furs. *Ibid.*, p. 269. They came the next year and brought the first knowledge of wampum (*ibid.*, pp. 281-282), one of the most fortunate things possible, for the wampum alone secured to the Plymouth men a great trade on the Kennebec, and enabled them later to keep it, to the disadvantage of Boston and the great annoyance of the French, whose trade was much affected by it. From this time the Plymouth fur trade increased by leaps and bounds, mainly on account of wampum; 400 weight of beavers, besides some otter, in 1631, 1348 in 1632, 3366 in 1633, 3738 in 1634, 1150 in 1635 and 2528 in 1636; the beaver alone in these six years amounting to "little less then 10000^{ti}." *Ibid.*, pp. 412-413. The Pilgrim fathers, says Mr. Biggar, "gradually usurped the territory where the French had formerly traded." *Early Trading Companies*, p. 130. This he says, "limited considerably the area open to the French traders on the Atlantic coast" (p. 119). It can hardly be said that such a trade was "unimportant" to a little colony of a few hundred souls. But the most marked characteristic of the Indian trade is here apparent, the rapid extinction of the beaver. At Plymouth the trade began to fall away again as early as 1635. New beaver country must be tapped, and the men of Plymouth began that march westward deeper and deeper into the Indian country which has been such a factor in our history.

As the beaver decreased, and the settlers increased, competition for trade became keener, involving the Plymouth colonists, the newly-established Colony of Massachusetts Bay, and the scattered traders unconnected with either. One of these traders, Thomas Morton, no friend of the Puritan settlers at the Bay, has left in his *New English Canaan* a most interesting and lively account of the trade and his controversies with the Bostonians arising out of it.

"The skinnese" [of the beaver], he says,^e are the best merchantable commodity that can be found, to cause ready money to be brought into the land, now that they are raised to 10 shillings a pound. A servant of mine in 5. yeares was thought to have a 1000. p. in ready gold gotten by beaver when hee dyed; whatsoever became of it" (p. 78). "eAnd I beleeve," he says in another place, "e that Jasons golden Fleece was either the same, or some other Fleece not of so much value" (p. 149). He intimates that the opposition to him at Merrymount was due to the fear that "hee would hinder the benefit of their Beaver trade," as he had done on the Kennebec before (pp. 149, 137). This is probably in great part true. It is worth

noting that the orgies with the Indians at Merrymount which so horrified the Boston people were a customary and successful means of promoting the trade everywhere on the continent. Morton is another witness to the great area covered by this trade at a very early period. He describes the Lake of the Iroquois out of which he, in common with the other New England settlers, believed the Potomac flowed. "About the parts of this Lake may be made a very greate Commodity by the trade of fures, to inrich those that shall plant there; a more compleat discovery of those parts is, (to my knowleadge,) undertaken by Henry Joseline, Esquier, sonne of Sir Thomas Joseline of Kent, Knight, by the approbation and appointment of that Heroick a very good Common wealths man Captaine John Mason, Esquier, a true foster Father and lover of vertue, (who at his owne chardge,) hath fitted Master Joseline and imployed him to that purpose; who no doubt will performe as much as is expected, if the Dutch, (by gettinge into those parts before him,) doe not frustrate his so hopefull and laudable designs. It is well knowne they aime at this place, and have a possibility to attaine unto the end of their desires therein, by meanes of the River of Mohegan, which of the English is named Hudsons River, where the Dutch have settled two well fortified plantations already. If that River be derived from the Lake, as our Country man in his prospect affirms it to be, and if they get and fortifie this place also, they will gleane away the best of the Beaver both from the French and the English, who have hitherto lived wholly by it; and very many old planters have gained good estates out of small beginnings by meanes thereof. And it is well knowne to some of our Nation that have lived in the Dutch plantation that the Dutch have gained by Beaver 20000. pound a yeare" (pp. 98-99). Farther to the north, the grants and attempted settlements were purely commercial and largely actuated by hope of gain by the Indian trade. See *Sir Ferdinando Gorges and his Province of Maine*, edited by J. P. Baxter (Prince Society), i, pp. 207, 211, 218, 218, 232-233; ii, p. 42.

By 1633 the receding of the beaver country made it necessary for the Plymouth settlers to seek new supplies. They had heard from Dutch and Indians and the Rhode Island people of great trade to be had on the Fresh or Connecticut River (Bradford, pp. 370-372), "[and having now good store of comodities, and also need to looke out wher they could advantage them selves to help them out of their great ingagments, they now begane to send that way to discover^e same, and trade with y^e natives.]" *Ibid.* But this was a rather hazardous undertaking for so small a settlement, so they sent Winslow and Bradford to Boston to propose a joint expedition. This was refused ostensibly on account of the danger of navigating the Connecticut (Winthrop, *History of New England* (1908), i, p. 103), and the Plymouth men were forced to act alone, sending "a bark to Connecticut, at this time, to erect a trading house there. When they came, they found the Dutch had built there, and did forbid the Plymouth men to proceed; but they set up their house notwithstanding, about a mile above the Dutch." *Ibid.*, pp. 109-110. Bradford reports the results to have been disappointing, but they saw "y^e most certainty would be by keeping a house ther, to receive y^e trad when it came down out of y^e inlande" p. 371. It could not have been a total failure, as "It pleased y^e Lord to inable them this year to send home a great quantity of beaver," 3,366 pounds in all (*ibid.*, p. 375). The clear statements of Bradford and Winthrop show beyond doubt that the prime purpose of all this Connecticut enterprise was to intercept the Indians coming from the interior with their furs by way of the Connecticut, and the

Dutch were unlikely to be much mollified by Bradford's pious protestations that "They did y^e Dutch no wrong, for they took not a foote of any land they bought, but went to y^e place above them!" *Ibid.*, p. 374. The previous refusal of the Boston people to join this expedition was equally ingenuous. In July they rejected that proposal *on account of the difficulty of navigating the Connecticut*. In October Winthrop makes this entry in describing the Connecticut: "This river runs so far northward, that it comes within a days journey of a part of Merrimack called .h.h. and so runs thence N. W. so near the Great Lake, as [allows] the Indians to pass their canoes into it over land. From this lake, and the hideous swamps about it, come most of the beaver which is traded between Virginia and Canada, which runs forth of this lake; and Patomack River in Virginia comes likewise out of it, or very near, so as from this lake there comes yearly to the Dutch about ten thousand skins, *which might easily be diverted by Merrimack*, if a course of trade were settled above in that river." *History of New England*, i, p. 110. Comment is unnecessary. There is abundant evidence of the importance of the fur trade in Massachusetts Bay. See, for example, *Massachusetts Colonial Records*, i, pp. 48, 96, 196, 322; iii, pp. 53-54, 208; iv, pt. i, pp. 291-292; pt. ii, pp. 397-400, etc. For many of these references I am indebted to a MS. thesis on the Indian Policy in New England, submitted for the degree of Master of Letters in the University of Wisconsin, by A. C. Shong.

Just as the Plymouth people cut off the Dutch on the Connecticut, so in time they themselves were affected by settlements higher up the stream. Edward Johnson's statement, written about 1654, in his *Wonder-Working Providence*, explains itself. "About this time [1645] one Mr. *Pinchin*, sometime a Magistrate, having out of desire to better his estate, by trading with the *Indians*, settled himself very remote (from all the Churches of Christ in the *Mattachusetts* Government) upon the river of Canectico, yet under their Government, he having some godly persons resorting unto them, they there erected a Town and Church of Christ, calling it Springfield, it lying upon this large navigable river, hath the benefit of transporting their goods by water, and also fitly seated for a Bever trade with the Indians, till the Merchants encreased so many, that it became little worth, by reason of their outbuying one another, which hath caused them to live upon husbandry!" (p. 199).

One of the main factors in the forming of the New England Confederacy is the Indian trade, the necessity of pushing it by united effort against the Dutch and the danger of war resulting therefrom. Pynchon's trading house at Springfield was peculiarly annoying to the Dutch. In 1647 the directors wrote, urging Stuyvesant to prevent the English locating there "by all means, which your Honor does not consider too dangerous, to involve us in a war with the English." *N. Y. Col. Docs.*, xiv, p. 77. In 1650 Stuyvesant complained bitterly to the New England Confederacy that through the high price paid by Pynchon for beaver, the trade was "much damnified and undervallued." Hazard's *Historical Collections*, ii, p. 155. The Confederation refused to interfere. *Ibid.*, p. 159. The governor of Canada tried to make capital of this trade jealousy of the English and Dutch, proposing that the New Englanders should allow a French force to attack the Iroquois by way of New England, and promising in return a free trade between the French and English. The New Englanders shrewdly answered that they were not anxious to be admitted to any trade which is so hampered as the French. *Ibid.*, pp. 182-184. The records of the meetings of the New England Confederacy in Hazard's second

volume will dispel any idea of the unimportance of the fur trade to New Englanders. In 1649 they forbade all foreigners from trading with the Indians in New England, and the Dutch records are full of similar provisions. O'Callaghan, *History of New Netherland*, ii, p. 108; O'Callaghan, *Laws of New Netherland*, pp. 13-15, 507, etc. Notwithstanding these prohibitions there was much smuggling of furs to New England. *N. Y. Col. Docs.*, xiv, pp. 159, 471. This clandestine trade was by no means small. Mr. Weeden estimates it at from ten to fifteen thousand beaver skins a year. *Economic and Industrial History of New England*, i, p. 131, citing O'Callaghan's *History of New Netherland*, i, pp. 131, 149, and Hazard's *Historical Collections*, i, p. 397. It was mainly due to "the great importation [into New Netherland] of Wampum from New England, which barthers therewith, and carries out of the Country not only the best cargoes sent hence, but also a large quantity of Beaver and other peltries." Letter of the directors to Stuyvesant, O'Callaghan's *Laws of New Netherland*, p. 434, note. It can hardly be said with truth that the commerce with the Indians was "unimportant" in New England.

NOTE B. (To page xv.)

THE EARLY FUR TRADE IN THE SOUTHERN COLONIES

As early as 1610 the Virginia settlers record having seen as many as 4000 deer skins "pyled up in one wardroabe of Powhatond' (*A True Declaration of Virginia*, Force's *Tracts*, iii, no. 1, p. 13), which could be for nothing but trade; and the statement corroborates the account of the coast trade in these skins to Canada. Captain Henry Fleet, a Maryland trader, writing in 1631, says a rival trader obtained at one time, 1500 weight of beaver near Piscataway (E. D. Neill, *The English Colonization in America*, p. 225), while he himself obtained 800 weight near the site of Washington City (*ibid.*, p. 226), and 4000 lbs. farther back in the interior (p. 229), while the Indians on the Potomac promised him 6000 lbs. the next season, worth £200 (pp. 235-236). And Father Andrew White said that a thirty-fold profit could be made on the Potomac, one merchant alone having shipped beaver skins in one year of the value of 40,000 pieces of gold. Force's *Tracts*, iv, no. 12, p. 6. See also *Virginia Richly and Truly Valued*, Force's *Tracts*, iii, no. 11, p. 52. Hariot also reported that deer skins were "to be had of the naturall inhabitants thousands yeerely by way of trafficke for trifles," *Narrative of the First English Plantation of Virginia* (reprint, London, 1893), p. 17. On the eastern shore of Virginia beaver was used as currency in 1637. Bruce's *Economic History of Virginia*, ii, p. 521. The account of John Lederer's travels into the interior show the importance of the trade at a later date (1670). *The First Explorations of the Trans-Allegheny Region*, edited by Alvord and Bidgood (esp. pp. 162, 169-171). Much of the dissatisfaction in Virginia, which culminated in Bacon's Rebellion, was due to Governor Berkeley's actions and private interests in the Indian trade. *Calendar of State Papers, America and West Indies, 1661-68*, p. 484. The remarkable manifesto of Bacon himself makes this clear. He says in part: "Another main article of our guilt is our design not only to ruin and extirpate all Indians in general, but all manner of trade with them, since the Governor by commission warrants this trade, who dare oppose it, although plantations be deserted, and the blood of our brethren spilt on all sides, our complaints continually murder upon murder. Who dare say that these traders at the heads of the rivers buy and sell our blood, and do still, notwithstanding the

late Act to the contrary. . . . The very foundation of all these disasters is the grant of the beaver trade to the Governor, but to say the grant is illegal, were not this to deserve the name of rebel and traitor." *Ibid.*, 1675-76, pp. 448-449. The outrageous frauds practised by the traders upon the Indians, which indirectly caused these massacres complained of by Bacon, are vividly described in a pamphlet published in London in 1731, and the Indian war of 1714 is traced to them. *The Importance of the British Plantations in America*, London, 1731, pp. 85-86. It is too evident from Governor Spotswood's letters, written early in the eighteenth century, that he too was interested in this trade. But the inevitable exhaustion of the beaver supply was already carrying the trade west of the mountains, where the competition of the French was keen. Spotswood shows a remarkable knowledge of their operations in the interior and a statesmanlike appreciation of the necessity of controlling the Indians of the interior through their trade by the building of English posts. *The Official Letters of Alexander Spotswood, Va. Hist. Soc. Coll.*, n. s., i, p. 40; ii, pp. 89, 94, 138, 144-150, 209, 230-238, 296-298, 301-303, 331. William Byrd's delightful *History of the Dividing Line*, written about the same time, is full of references to the Indian trade and its importance. He makes the interesting statement that Virginia traders were trading among the Cherokees far beyond the mountains as early as the middle of the seventeenth century, eighty years before the colony of Georgia "was thought of." i, p. 142. See also i, pp. 179-180, 183-184, where he attributes the Indian war of 1713 to the actions of the traders. This is borne out by other evidence. *A State of Georgia, Force's Tracts*, i, no. 3, p. 3. The College of William and Mary was partly supported by export duties on furs. Henning, *Virginia Statutes*, iii, p. 123 (1693); *Preston Papers*, MSS. in the Wisconsin Historical Society Library, i, no. 9. The Virginia traders, however, were barred from the western beaver country by the "Endless Mountains," and were forced to go to the Cherokees by way of Georgia, where they were required to take out licenses after the founding of that colony. Byrd, *op. cit.*, pp. 141-142. But the trade was important there long before the founding of Georgia. Winsor, *Mississippi Basin*, p. 20. This trade was carried on mainly by English capital, most of the profits returning to England (*The Importance of the British Plantations in America*, p. 66), and it was no small trade. From March, 1730 to March, 1731 there were shipped 300 casks, each containing eight or nine hundred deer skins (*A Description of the Province of South Carolina* (1731); *Force's Tracts*, ii, no. 11, p. 6), and the yearly average was "above 200,000 deer-skins undrest." *Ibid.*, p. 7. When Georgia was founded, Augusta absorbed most of this trade, which was astonishingly great. In 1740, five years after the post was established, there were several warehouses full of Indian goods. The people of the town owned five large boats, which made four or five trips a year to Charleston, each with a cargo of nine or ten thousand pounds, worth from twelve to fifteen hundred pounds sterling. Between Augusta and the interior, 2000 pack horses were needed in 1740, "and the Traders, Packhorse-men, Servants, Townsmen and others, dependent upon that Business, are moderately computed to be six hundred white Men . . . carrying . . . English Goods; for which the Indians pay in Deer-Skins, Beaver, and other Furs." *A State of Georgia, Force's Tracts*, i, no. 3, p. 6. This was the "unimportant" Indian commerce of the little colony of Georgia. The French memoirs furnish evidence of the enormous territory covered by these southern traders. Their influence in the early years of the eighteenth century extended

probably further west than even that of the English and Dutch in New York. As early as 1701 the French report the designs of the Carolina people to trade with the Indians on the upper Mississippi. *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, xvi, pp. 208-210. In 1714 apparently the Carolina traders were trying to trade with the Illinois, through the aid of certain French residents there. *Ibid.*, p. 303. See also *ibid.*, p. 317. In the next year they are reported to have begun to build a fort at the mouth of the Ohio. *Ibid.*, pp. 318-319, 335, 345. Céloron in 1749 found many Carolina traders on the upper Ohio, and warned them to leave. *Catholic Historical Researches*, ii, p. 135; iii, p. 24. Much more evidence might be cited from the official records published by the various southern states and elsewhere. See also Winsor, *The Mississippi Basin*, p. 171 *et seq.*