

for sending letters from one to the other, few. Lord Cornbury, as late as 1702,¹ informed the Lords of Trade that there were so few vessels running between New York and ports in England that he had to depend for his correspondence on Boston or Philadelphia, which places had regular communication with the mother country.

Nor was the case of New York materially improved in 1708. Cornbury, in that year, pleaded with the board of trade for a regular packet service to some part of the American continent. Sometimes many months elapsed, without his hearing in any way from home. Before he received his last letters in May, he had heard nothing from England for fifteen months.

There were but two safe ways of sending letters to England, which were the Virginia fleet, and the Mast fleet of New England. From Virginia there was no post, and it was very hard to know when that fleet would sail. From Boston there was a post by which Cornbury could hear once a week in summer, and once a fortnight in winter, so that they had a sure conveyance by the Mast fleet. Advantage had to be taken, as opportunity offered, Cornbury informed the board of trade, of the packets running from the West Indies to England, but as several of the packet boats had been captured, this was a very uncertain mode of communication.

But, although the three groups of colonies had each its own connection with England, until 1672 there was no connection whatever between these groups. Nor was any thought to be necessary. The groups were separated from one another not only by space, but by social and political differences.

The Puritans of New England and the Cavaliers of Virginia, had little in common but the memories of a quarrel, which was still warm; and New York was still largely Dutch, though even at that date it was taking on the cosmopolitan character, which has since distinguished it.

As for the trade of the colonies, Mr. Woodrow Wilson stated—"the main lines of trade run straight to the mother country, and were protected when there was need by English fleets. Both the laws of parliament and their own interest bound the trade of the colonies to England. The Navigation Act of 1660 forbade all trade with the colonies except in English bottoms; forbade also, the shipment of tobacco any whither but to England itself; and an act of 1663 forbade the importation of anything at all except out of England, which it was then once for all determined must

¹ *N. Y. Col. Docs.*, IV. 1017.