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DISCOVERIES AND TRADE OF THE RIVAL FRENCH AND ENGLISH COLONISTS IN THE HUDSON BAY TERRITORIES.

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Having already given a summary sketch of the trading rivalries of the French and English colonists, nearly two centuries ago, in the valleys of the St. Lawrence, Ottawa, and Ohio rivers, and up the Great Lakes,* we propose to devote this paper to a brief notice of the almost cotemporaneous discoveries and rival trade of the same colonists in the great *Baye du Nord*, or Hudson Bay Territory.

On reading the quaint old documents which so often record with interesting minuteness the unostentatious daring and heroic fortitude of the early explorers and traders in these territories, one cannot but wonder at the great efforts which they put forth to so little purpose. The French penetrated to Hudson's Bay, chiefly by an overland route up the Saguenay from Tadoussac,—up the St. Maurice, from Trois Rivières,* or northward from Lake Superior; while the English, having no foothold north of the St. Lawrence, had to reach it by the difficult navigation of an unknown and icy sea and an inhospitable and almost inaccessible coast, and, in a few later instances, overland from Lake Superior.

It is true that the main object of these explorations, undertaken on the part of the English, was not, in the first place, for the purposes of trade. With them they were planned with a higher motive and with a broader commercial aim. The discovery of a direct north-west passage to Cathay, or the distant Indies, and far-off China, was the goal which the early English navigators so eagerly sought. Even when the cher-

* British American Magazine for September, pp. 516-526.

* *Relation des Jesuites*, 1653.