

twine, steel-traps, tin kettles, frying-pans, etc. ; on various shelves are piled bales of cloth of all colors, capotes, blankets, and caps ; and in smaller divisions are placed files, scalping-knives, gun screws, flints, balls of twine, fire steel, canoe awls, and glass beads of all colors and sizes. Drawers in the counter contain needles, pins, scissors, fish-hooks, thimbles, and vermilion for painting canoes and faces. On the floor is strewn a variety of copper kettles, from half a pint to a gallon ; and in one corner of the room stand a dozen trading-guns, and beside them a keg of powder and a bag of shot.

In some of the trade-rooms a small space is railed off by the counter near the door, behind which the Indians stand to trade. Sometimes they are confined to a separate apartment called the Indian room, adjoining that occupied by the traders, and business is carried on through a loop-hole communicating between the two. In many of the posts in the plain country the trade-room is cleverly contrived so as to prevent a sudden rush of the Indians, the approach from outside the pickets being through a long narrow passage, only of sufficient width to admit of one Indian at a time, and bent at an acute angle near the window at which the trader stands. This precaution is rendered necessary by the frantic desire which sometimes seizes upon the Indian to shoot the clerk, which he might easily do were the passage straight.

At most of the interior posts time moves slowly, and change is almost unknown. To-day is the same as a hundred years ago. The list of goods ordered from England for this year has exactly the same items as that of 1790. Strands, cottons, beads, and trading-guns are still the wants of the Indians, and are still traded for musquash and beaver.

The system of trade at the Company's posts is entirely one of barter. Until recent years money values were unknown ; but this medium of exchange has gradually become familiar to the Indians, and the almighty dollar is rapidly asserting its supremacy in savagedom.