

cheapest Rate? he said, He thinks he ought to follow his Directions, and not to lower the Standard, since it would be for the Advantage of the Publick to give a more advanced Price, as it would encourage the Natives to bring more Skins down, who bring their Commodities from a great Distance, and will not bring them at all, if they can sell them nearer home for a better Price.

That the French intercept the Indians coming down with their Trade, as the Witness believes, he having seen them with Guns, and Cloth of French Manufacture; and that an Indian told him, there was a French Settlement up *Moose River* something to the Southward of the West, at the Distance, as the Witness apprehends, of about Fifty Miles.

And being asked, If he thought the Indians would bring any Furs at all, if they could sell them dearer? he said, The French deal in light Furs, and take all of that Sort they can get, and the Indians bring the heavy to us; that sometimes the Indians bring down Martens Skins, but that is when they don't meet with the French; but he never knew any Indians, who had met the French, bring down any light Furs; that he thinks, if the Governors would advance the Price, even for large Furs, which the French won't buy, it would encourage the Indians to bring down the light Furs, who say they often throw their heavy Goods overboard, rather than undergo the Difficulties of bringing them down from the Want of Provisions.

That the French deal in a different manner from us; they reckon each Marten as a Beaver; whereas the Company fix Three Martens for a Beaver.

And being asked, Whether if the Governor was to reduce the Standard so low as only to give Twelve Flints for a Beaver, those Skins would not be brought? he said, He believed not; for the Indians, in his Opinion, would not come again.

That he has conversed with Indians at *Albany*, who told him, They were Two Moons in coming down, and some of them not so long; and that some of their Countryman carried Beavers to the French: And some of those Indians were clothed in French Cloth.

That the French Settlement on *Moose River* is on *Abittilis Lake*; that the Indians sometimes come down *Moose River* to *Albany* Factory, but not often; in which case they come near the French Settlement, but not close by it, it being on a Lake near the River.

That he has been up *Albany River* about Forty Miles, and saw no Sign of Habitation, only some little Houses; that by all Reports the Indians trade to more Advantage with the French than with the Company; for the French require Thirty Martens for a Gun; and sometimes, when they are scarce of Goods, Thirty-five; for sometimes, they have not Goods to trade with the Natives; whereas the English, for a Gun, require Thirty-six, and sometimes Forty.

That the Trade is chiefly carried on in Summer-time, when the Ice is out of the River, though sometimes the Indians near the Forts come down in Winter, and the Company never refuse to trade with them whenever they come; and he never saw any Beavers or Furs refused, which were killed in Season, or any good Skins rejected; that the Indians have no Warehouses, every Family bringing their own Skins; and if they would bring more, the Company would undoubtedly buy them; but he cannot account for their not encouraging them to bring more down.

Being asked, What the Value of European Goods in the Company's Possession at *Hudson's Bay* might be; he said, He could not judge of that, the Value being never specified, but only the Quantity.

That the Fur Trade might, in the Opinion of the Witness, be extended, by sending up People into the Country with Goods, to winter among the Natives; that the Witness himself, if a young Man, and proper-

ly encouraged, would be willing to go on such an Undertaking; that he was of that Opinion during the Time he was in the Company's Service; but never disclosed such his Opinion to the Company, because the Governors loved to have the sole Management of Affairs; and if any inferior Person should offer to interfere in Matters of that Nature, he is sure to be immediately discharged.

That the Indians about the Factory have brought many Deer and Elks Skins to *York Fort*; which is the principal Fort for those Skins.

Being examined as to the Treatment of the Indians by the Governors; he said, That he had never known any Indians to whom the Governors gave Credit, on their bringing down a Number of Skins insufficient to furnish them with Necessaries for the following Year; that when the Indians have been in want of Provisions, he has known the Governors refuse to give them any; but does not know for what Reason they refused it, it not being proper for a Person of inferior Rank to ask a Reason for the Governor's Actions; that he has seen the Governors beat and strike the Indians, the Reason of which he imagines to be, that they had affronted the Governors, or stole a Hatchet, or some such thing; but he never knew any Goods taken from them without paying something for them; they deliver the Goods first, and then the Governors give them what they please; but sometimes, if the Indians make a Noise, they give them their Goods again.

That the Company make no Difference in the Indians coming down to trade, but favour the Hunters; and some Governors use them better than others; and it is certainly the Interest of the Company to use the Indians well, since several, to the knowledge of the Witness, are prevented from coming down to trade on Account of ill Usage; and it is a common thing with the Governors to make Presents to the Captains or Chiefs of the Indians, to encourage them to bring as many Men as possible; but that the Trade might be further extended by sending up Europeans to winter among the Natives; which, though the Company have not lately attempted, the French actually do, the Witness having seen and conversed with a French Canadian, called *Joseph de Lustra*, who wintered several Years among the Indians.

That a Boat of Thirty Ton would not be able to sail far up *Albany River*; but large Canoes which carry Twenty or Thirty Men, with Luggage, will go up that River.

That the Company suffer their Servants to hunt, who are allowed one-half of the Profits of what they catch; but he never heard of any going above Sixty Miles up *Churchill River*; that the Witness was never above Forty Miles up in the Country; and it would be necessary to make Settlements much higher than that, to hinder the French from intercepting the Indians as they come down; and he thinks it would be for the Interest of the Company to make such Settlements; but perhaps they may be advised to the contrary.

That he went about Forty Miles up *Albany River* upon the Ice, in search of Timber, but found none to answer his Purpose; and the Reason why he went no further was, that he was limited in Time, as is usual in such Cases; that in this Journey they met with Ducks and Geese, but no Corn or Huts; that 'tis possible to travel 500 Miles, as the Witness believes, and not meet with any Inhabitants, who have no fixed Places of Abode, as Towns or Villages; but are continually wandering up and down: But there are Places where they lay up their Goods, and where People might trade with them, if they would go up; that Houses might be built in the Woods near the Rivers, and the Goods might be drawn up; and that those Places where the Indians lay up their Goods are sometimes near the Rivers, and sometimes not.

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