

"Adventurers of the Hudson's Bay Company." Their declared and proper objects were, of course, navigation, and trade in the furs, fish, or other productions of Hudson's bay. *Exploration* was, indeed, one of the benefits anticipated from the company; but the company itself proved, for more than a century, to be the great obstacle to exploration; or, in the emphatic language of the London Quarterly Review, (a competent witness on such a point,) "From the moment this body of 'adventurers' was instituted, the *spirit* of 'adventure' died away; and every succeeding effort was palsied by the baneful influence of a monopoly, of which the discovery of a north-west passage was deemed the forerunner of destruction." This company is to America, precisely what the East India Company is to Asia. It has been suffered to extend its power from Labrador southwestwardly to Lake Superior, thence along the *ligne des versants* of the Mississippi and the Missouri, and so sweeping around by the base of the Rocky mountains to the Slave Lake, and thence back to the extreme northeastern shores of the Atlantic. A glance at the map will show the vast extent of these imperial dominions. (*Bouchette's Br. Dom. vol. 1, p. 32.*) When, by the aid of the Anglo-American provinces, Great Britain had subdued Canada, this did not become incorporated with the possessions of the Hudson's Bay Company. On the contrary, when the independence of the United States gave rise to new relations in the northwest, the Hudson's Bay Company was placed by Britain on the footing of an independent power; and in regulating the rights of mutual transit in that quarter, Jay's treaty contains this clause: "the country within the limits of the Hudson's Bay Company only excepted." That is to say, when the territorial or commercial rights of the United States are to be restricted, the Hudson's Bay company is put forward as an independent foreign state. So also is it when there is opportunity or occasion to extend British rights in competition with ours; as in dealings with the Indians it has repeatedly happened, where the acts of the company have at all times been greatly injurious to the United States. But, on the contrary, if the United States, or any other power, seeks to repress the pretensions of the company, it is no longer left by Great Britain to stand on its own bottom as a political community, but is taken under the wing of the British Government. This, indeed, we know is the precise mode in which the East India Company has been made the instrument of conquering the hundred millions of Hindostan.

After the Hudson's Bay Company had, for a length of time, lorded it in sole supremacy over the Indians of the extensive region claimed by it, there sprung up a competitor of its profitable fur-trade, in the Northwest Company of Montreal. These two companies did not scruple to engage in continual feuds, growing out of jealousies of trade, and mutual complaints of violated privileges; nay, they actually waged hostilities one against the other, in the guise of sovereign States—rendering the interior of the continent a scene of rapine, outrage, and bloodshed. (*Earl of Selkirk, Claims, &c.*)

These empire-companies, and their traders, trappers, and agents, have been the immediate instruments of much of that perpetual intermeddling of Great Britain with the Indians of the United States, which, from 1775 to the present day, has never ceased to be practised to our injury; and the fruits of which were seen in every one of the disasters of the west and northwest, from the massacres of Wyoming and Cherry Valley, and the de-