

English, who lived chiefly in the towns of Quebec and Montreal, was one to two Canadians. Some of the former also lived at Three Rivers, Terrebonne, William Henry (Sorel), St. Johns, and at the entrance to lake Champlain, while a few were scattered among the Canadians in the rural parishes. The proportion of English to Canadians in the two districts of Quebec and Montreal, outside the towns, was about one to forty; in the same districts, including the towns, it was one to fifteen; in the districts of Hesse and Gaspé, two to three, and in the whole Province, about one to five (1).

The English devoted themselves chiefly to trade, of which they practically had the whole control. That trade was with England, the West Indies and the American colonies. The chief exports consisted of cod and salmon, oil, potash, linseed oil, flour, biscuits, peas, wheat, boards and deals, hoops, oak staves, ash oars and large pieces of oak. The imports were: rum, in large quantities: brandy and wines, molasses and sugar, gun-powder, salt, tea and coffee. (2)

But little cloth and leather was imported. The peasants made their own cloth for their clothing and also made their own shoes.

The fur trade was always very active; thousands of beaver, marten, otter, mink, bear, muskrat, raccoon, etc., etc., skins were exported. (3)

After the conquest, the fur trade with the Indians was open to all. A band of adventurers had invaded the posts formerly occupied by the French traders and, to attract the Indians, they distributed quantities of intoxicating liquor among them; great demoralization resulted and the very remunerative fur trade was threatened with ruin.

The traders realized that the only way to escape disaster and to remedy the many disorders due to individual trading, was to unite together and form a large company whereby their mutual interests could be more easily promoted.

To that end, in 1783, Joseph and Thomas Frobisher founded the North West Company which was to become the rival of that of Hudson's Bay. The rivalry soon degenerated into bloody battles with lasted over a quarter of a century. (4)

Agriculture was developing, but progress was very slow and but little commensurate with the fertility of the soil. The settlers adhered to the old routine and it was necessary to infuse new blood in the rural population. Lord Dorchester loved the Canadian peasantry and took

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(1) Dorchester's letter to Sydney, 1788. Const. Doc., (1759-1791), p. 654.

(2) Statistics of the trade of Quebec, (1768-1783). Report on the Archives of Canada, for the year 1888.

(3) Imports and exports of the port of Quebec for the years 1783, 1784, 1785 and 1786. Can. Arch., Q. 27-1, fol. 429.

(4) In 1786, there were shipped to Europe 116,623 beaver skins; 48,436 marten skins; 23,644, otter skins; 9,576 mink skins; 6,213 fox skins; 17,713 bear skins; 202,719 musk-rat skins; 108,521, raccoon skins. Can. Arch., Q. 27-1, fol. 430.

(4) For the fur trade during the first years of English domination, see the report on the Archives of Canada, for the year 1890. Note C, pp. 46 and following.