

have acted under it ever since with great benefit to the private men who compose the company, though comparatively with little advantage to Great Britain. It is true, that their trade in beavers and other species of furs is not inconsiderable, and it is a trade in itself of the best kind; its object enters largely into our manufactures, and carries nothing but our manufactures from us to procure it; and thus it has the qualities of the most advantageous kinds of traffic. The company has besides pretty large returns in beaver and deer skins. It is said that the dividends of this company are prodigious; far exceeding what is gained in any of the other great trading bodies; yet their capital is small, they seem little inclined to enlarge their bottom, and appear strongly possessed with that spirit of jealousy that prevails in some degree in all knots and societies of men endued with peculiar privileges. The officers of the company have behaved to those who wintered within their jurisdiction in search of the North-West passage (one of the purposes for which the company itself was originally instituted) in such a manner as to give us the truest idea of this spirit. If I had been singular in this opinion, I should have expressed my sentiments with much greater diffidence; but this abuse has been often and loudly complained of. It would appear astonishing that this trade has not hitherto been
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