

find the following instructions addressed to Henry Sargeant, regarding trade with the interior: "You are to choose out from amongst our servants such as are best qualified with strength of body and the country language to travel and to penetrate into the country, and to draw down the Indians by fair and gentle means to trade with us."

But the Company was to learn that the parsimony which then characterized its policy was not calculated to foster the success of its aims. The majority of the men it sent out from England could not be classified under the head of adventurous spirits, ready to dare all for mere excitement and the prospect of gain. They were for the most part young men gifted with no more aptitude for the work in the wilderness than a disinclination to pursue their callings at home. No small number were dissatisfied apprentices; one William Evans had been a drawer at the Rainbow Inn; Mr. Portman himself had sent his scullion.

Even at that early day the staffs employed on the plantations were recruited from amongst the very class least competent to exploit those regions. The majority of the applicants for employment in the Company's service in the seventeenth century were not men of character and vigour, or even of robust physique, but rather hare-brained artisans of the mild, dare-devil type, whose parents and friends foresaw, if London or Bristol formed the sphere of their talents, a legal and violent rather than a natural termination of their respective careers.

Sargeant's response to the foregoing injunction certainly served to enlighten his superiors. "I shall not be neglectful," he wrote, "as soon as I can find any man capable and willing to send up into the country with the Indians, to endeavour to penetrate into what the country will and may produce, and to effect their utmost in bringing down the Indians to our factory; but your Honours should give good encouragement to those who undertake such extraordinary service; or else I fear that there will be but few

that will embrace such employment."

The rebuke was just; but it seems to have given offence to some of the more pompous members of the Company; and Sargeant was desired not to cast any further reflection on his employers in his communications to them. Nevertheless, the Company was soon to learn the value of a less niggardly policy.

At the new settlement on Nelson River events were happening, which were to decide, temporarily at least, the sovereignty of that part of the Bay.

For ten days the two ex-employees, Radisson and Groseilliers gave no further evidence to the English of their presence. But on the tenth day their curiosity and uneasiness regarding the conduct of the English Governor, Bridgar, and the other servants of the Company, had reached such a pitch that it was decided without further consideration that Radisson should start off at once to reconnoitre their behaviour. The actual distance between Fort Bourbon, on the Hays River, and the Company's factory on Nelson River was not above fifty miles; but owing to the dangerous character of the river, and the necessity for delay before an attempt could be made to cross it, Radisson and his party consumed fourteen days on the journey.

On their arrival on the 3rd of February one of the first objects to attract their attention was the *Prince Rupert*, stuck fast in the ice and mud about a mile from where the factory was being erected. At the same time they met the Governor, who was out on a hunting expedition with the chief mate of the vessel. Satisfying himself that no treachery was intended Radisson accepted Bridgar's invitation to enter the log-house which he had caused to be built for his own occupancy. Radisson introduced one of the Frenchmen who accompanied him as the captain of an imaginary ship, which he averred had arrived from France in his behalf. "Mr. B. believed it and anything else I chose to tell him," remarks Radisson naively, "I aiming al-