

to get it undertaken by the Public, and hop'd he would get it promoted, by sending out two Sloops from the Admiralty. To which he was pleas'd to send me the following Letter :

Nº. X.

SIR, *Admiralty-Office, March 4, 1737-8.*

I Received the Favour of your Letter of the 20th past. I believe you judge very right that the *Hudson's Bay* Company do not desire to have any Body interfere with them in the Fur Trade in those Parts; they seem to be content with what they have, and make (I believe) considerable Profit by it; and if it should be farther extended, which might be the Case if a farther Discovery was made: For tho' they should not find a navigable Passage thro' into the South, they might probably find *Indian Nations*, from whom Furs might be bought cheaper than they are bought in *Hudson's Bay*, and that would be a Disadvantage to their Trade.

The Probabilities of finding a Passage, as you propose, seem to be very strong; the Flood coming that Way is almost a Demonstration; what Difficulties may be in the Execution can't be foreseen. If a Passage could be found into the South Sea, it would open a very large Field, and very probably of a very profitable Commerce; but the first Projectors, let the Affair succeed never so well, have seldom if ever found their Account in it. However, that should not hinder others from exerting themselves in the discovering any Thing that may be advantageous to the Public; but a Spirit of that Kind seems to have been asleep for many Years. War may have perhaps prevented, in some Measure, and diverted Mens Thoughts from any Enterprize of that Nature. I confess I have myself