

given for the beaver in the country depend upon what the beaver sells for in *J. Rae, Esq., M. D.*
London?—Of course, entirely.

521. Do you remember the price of beaver a pound some 20 years ago in 23 February 1857.
London?—I do not.

522. Was it 30 s.?—About 30 s. or 32 s.

523. Do you remember what it was selling for about three years ago?—
Seven shillings or eight shillings a pound.

524. It is now, I believe, about 13 s.?—Yes.

525. *Mr. Percy Herbert.*] What is the weight of an average beaver?—About
a pound; some of the large ones are a pound and a quarter.

526. *Mr. Grogan.*] Am I to understand you to say, that in fact the whole
trade there is one of traffic?—Yes.

527. And that the beaver is the unit of computation in the purchase and sale
of any article?—Yes; it is the currency understood by the Indian.

528. I think you stated that latterly the tariff for that barter had been aug-
mented by the Company in favour of the Indian?—Yes.

529. That is, that they allow a larger quantity of European goods for the
beavers than they formerly did?—Yes; there was a modification of the tariff
in favour of the Indians some years ago; I forget the season.

530. How do you reconcile that with the fact which we have just heard, that
the value of beaver has fallen from 30 s. to 7 s. or 8 s., or 13 s.?—I do not
know the reason for making this modification.

531. Have you any impression on your mind that the Company are carrying
on an unfortunate trade?—No, I think not.

532. How does it arise that the Company are able, notwithstanding the great
reduction in the value of beaver, to give a larger quantity of European goods
to the Indian and still have a large profit?—It arose, I fancy, from the fact that
European goods got cheaper; that is the only way that I can account for it; I
was ordered to make a modification at Mackenzie's River, and I would not do it,
except to a small extent, because I found that things went on just as well; that
the Indians could clothe themselves very well if they did any work.

533. Are the goods furnished to the servants of the Company and to the
Indians the same in quality?—Exactly the same.

534. Are the Indians aware that they pay a higher rate for them than the
Company's servants are charged?—They do not seem to be aware of it; they
are not told that they pay a higher value, but they are quite satisfied with their
treatment generally, and the Indian can clothe himself and get all his requisites
if he likes to work.

535. *Mr. Bell.*] Has the same reduction taken place with regard to other
furs besides the beaver; the silver fox, for instance; is that selling at a pro-
portionately lower price now to the beaver?—No, I believe not.

536. Is it higher?—It is about the same that it always has been; they vary
considerably; some kinds of fur go out of fashion, and others come in.

537. Has the general average price of furs in this country fallen within the
last 20 years, or risen?—Some have varied. I do not think the average price
on the whole has altered; but beavers have fallen very much, and they were
the principal returns of the country at that time.

538. And some have risen?—Yes; I believe a few have risen.

539. *Mr. Roebuck.*] I suppose, during your residence at Moose Factory, you
saw the trading with the Indians?—I saw it; I was not a trader, but I saw
the mode of trading.

540. I will read you a description given of that mode of trading, and will
ask you whether it be a correct one: "Thus, an Indian arriving at one of the
Company's establishments with a bundle of furs, which he intends to trade,
proceeds, in the first instance, to the trading room; there the trader separates
the furs into lots, and, after adding up the amount, delivers to the Indian
a number of little pieces of wood, indicating the number of made-beaver to
which his hunt amounts. He is next taken to the store-room, where he finds
himself surrounded by bales of blankets, slop-coats, guns, knives, powder horns,
flints, axes, &c. Each article has a recognised value in made-beaver. A slop-
coat, for example, is 12 made-beavers, for which the Indian delivers up 12 of
his pieces of wood; for a gun he gives 20; for a knife, 2; and so on, until his
stock of wooden cash is expended." Have you ever seen that process?—

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Certainly;