

be the entrepôt and place of staple for all foreign trade. It was the Dutch against whom these acts were aimed."<sup>1</sup>

As has happened so often, however, that which could not be accomplished by reason of the feebleness of the common interest was brought about by the presence of impending danger. In 1672, war broke out between the English and the Dutch, the object of which was maritime supremacy and colonial expansion. The stakes were the colonies in Africa, the East Indies, the West Indies and America.

The English having ousted their rivals from New York presented a strong front on the North American continent; and the only thing lacking was cohesion among the several colonies. At the outbreak of the war, the king directed governor Lovelace, of New York, to see what could be done towards establishing a regular postal communication between the colonies.

Lovelace arranged for a monthly service by courier between New York and Boston.<sup>2</sup> There was no road between the two places; and governor Winthrop was asked to provide an expert woodman, who would guide the courier by the easiest road.

The courier was directed to blaze the route, and it was hoped that a good road might be made along the route pursued. The courier made his trips for a few months only, when New York was captured by a Dutch fleet which came suddenly upon it. The town was restored to the English at the conclusion of the war in 1674, and with the disappearance of the danger, the communication also was dropped.

A few years later danger of a more serious character threatened from another quarter, and again the colonies were compelled to recognize the necessity of yielding something from the attitude of jealous independence, which characterized them. Between the English colonies and the French in Canada there was a steady rivalry for the possession of the fur trade of the Western country. Each had Indian allies, whose methods of warfare carried terror among their opponents.

The English were in numbers very much superior to the French; and if united and determined could have overwhelmed them. The unwillingness of the English to take any action in common was costing them dearly, as the outlying parts of all the colonies were being constantly harassed by the Indian tribes in league with the French.

<sup>1</sup> *A History of the American People*, II. 16.

<sup>2</sup> *Coll. Mass. Hist. Soc.*, fifth series, IX. 83-84.