

The British colonists could not, of course, entertain friendly feelings towards the tribes which sided with their enemies and often devastated their homes and murdered their people. But it must be admitted that, from the first, the British in America were far behind the French in christianlike conduct towards the native races. The colonial traders generally despised the Indians and treated them as of commercial value only, as gatherers of pelts, and held their lives in little more esteem than the lives of the animals that yielded the pelts. The missionary zeal of New England, compared with that of New France, was exceedingly mild. Rum was a leading article of trade. The Indians were often cheated out of their furs ; in some instances they were slain and their packs stolen. Sir William Johnson described the British traders as ' men of no zeal or capacity : men who even sacrifice the credit of the nation to the basest purposes.' There were exceptions, of course, in such men as Alexander Henry and Johnson himself, who, besides being a wise official and a successful military commander, was one of the leading traders.

No sooner was New France vanquished than the British began building new forts and