

THE Company have for eighty years slept at the edge of a frozen sea; they have shewn no curiosity to penetrate farther themselves, and have exerted all their art and power to crush that spirit in others. They have kept the language of the natives, and all that might be gained by a familiar and friendly intercourse with them, as much as possible, a secret to their own servants; and the invaluable treasures of this extensive country a profound secret to Great Britain. But there are not only bare symptoms, but confirmed accounts of many rich mines here; there are fine rivers running from and leading to the southward and south-westward, inviting the people to go up and see what the countries afford: and interpreters have gathered from the natives, that they have been in countries where the rivers run a contrary course to the rivers in the Bay; that some have seen the sea and ships on the other side of the land to the westward; that the people dwell in towns; that little snow lies in that country*; and that the French live and trade with them within the country at the heads of those rivers that run down to the English factories.

* Some of the Indians that come to York-fort have wondered to see the snow-shoes; and upon being told to what use they were applied, have answered, that as they had but little snow, they had no occasion for such helps. And a trader informed me, that having one day offered an Indian woman some prunes to make up the defects of a bad commodity, she asked him how he could offer her fruit of which she had plenty in her own country.