

of the Furs down the Mississippi, instead of the St. Lawrence, they compute that a very large Quantity of Merchandise, formerly passed thro' this Province to Nations unknown to Pondiac [Pontiac], and too distant to come to any of our Posts, and that so much is lost of the consumption of British Manufactures. They say that their own Interest will allways be a sufficient Reason and Motive to treat these people well, and to use their utmost Endeavours to keep them in Peace, and the Canadians will engage to take some English in every Canoe, to acquire a knowledge of these Countries, and the Language, to shew they have no Jealousy at their becoming acquainted with this Trade. 'Tis imagined here, that the other Provinces, who are neither acquainted with these Countries, nor so advantageously situated for this Trade are the secret causes of their being so severely fettered; they presume to think each Province should be permitted to avail itself of its natural Situation, and acquired advantages, and that it would be as unreasonable in us to expect the Posts to the Southward should be shut up by Regulations, as long as ours are by a severe climate; that in this Respect all the King's Subjects should be considered as Brothers, or one Family, and that the Rivalship ought not to be between Province and Province, but between the King's Subjects and those of France and Spain; some have offered to prove, that two years ago, while they were confined to the Fort, the French or Spaniards from the Mississippi came within twenty Leagues of the Detroit, and carried off the very Furs, that were intended to clear off the Credit given the Indians the year before.¹ They even assert 'tis impossible to prevent them from carrying off by far the greatest Part of that Trade unless those Restraints are taken off, they maintain that the only possible Means of preventing those Evils for the future, and of removing the Discontents of the Indians, for not being supplied with the necessaries of Life as formerly, is to permit them to go among them as was the Practice of this Colony, that thereby they will be enabled to undersell the Mississippi Traders, detect their Artifices, and be the

¹ *Wis. Hist. Coll.*, xi., p. 163, note 2. — ED.