

**P A P E R S**  
RELATING TO  
**An ACT of the ASSEMBLY**  
OF THE  
**PROVINCE of NEW-YORK,**  
FOR  
**Encouragement of the *Indian Trade*, &c. and  
for prohibiting the selling of *Indian Goods*  
to the *French*, viz. of *CANADA*.**

- I. A PETITION of the Merchants of *London* to His Majesty against the said Act.
- II. HIS MAJESTY'S Order in Council, referring the Petition to the Lords Commissioners of *Trade* and *Plantation*.
- III. EXTRACT of the Minutes of the said Lords, concerning some Allegations of the Merchants before them.
- IV. The REPORT of the said Lords to His Majesty on the Merchants Petition, and other Allegations.
- V. The REPORT of the Committee of Council of the Province of *New-York*, in Answer to the said Petition.
- VI. A MEMORIAL concerning the Furr-Trade of *New-York*, by *C. Colden*, Esq;

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T O T H E  
K I N G ' s M o s t E x c e l l e n t M a j e s t y i n  
C o u n c i l ,

The Humble Petition and Representation of  
*Samuel Baker, Samuel Storke, John Bayeux,  
Richard Feneway, Robert Hackshaw, Joseph  
Low, Joseph Paice, George Streatfield, Wil-  
liam Parkin, and John Evered, Merchants  
of London, trading to New-York, in behalf  
of themselves, and the rest of the Persons  
concern'd in the New-York Trade.*

S H E W E T H ,

**T**HAT by an Act passed in *New-York*  
the 19th of *November, 1720*, entitled,  
*An Act for Encouragement of the Indian  
Trade, and rendering it more beneficial to the  
Inhabitants of this Province, and for prohibiting the  
selling of Indian Goods to the French*, all Trade  
whatsoever is prohibited in the strictest Manner,  
and under the severest Penalties, between the Inha-  
bitants of *New-York* Government, and the *French* of  
*Canada*, or any Subjects of the *French King*, or any  
Person whatsoever; for or on the behalf of any such  
Subjects; and which Act was to continue in force  
for three Years.

That the Reasons assigned in the Preamble of  
this Act, for the passing thereof, are, For that the  
*French* at *Canada*, by means of *Indian* Goods pur-  
chased from the Inhabitants of *New-York*, had not  
only almost wholly engrossed the *Indian Trade* to them-  
selves,

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selves, but had, in great measure, withdrawn the Affections of the *Five Nations* of *Indians* from the Inhabitants of *New-York*, and render'd them wavering in their Faith and Allegiance to your Majesty ; and would, if such Trade was not prevented, wholly alienate the Minds of the said *Indians*, which might prove of dangerous Consequence to the *English Interest* in *America*.

That this Act was sent home for your Majesty's royal Consideration, but your Petitioners do not find that your Majesty ever signified your Allowance or Disallowance thereof ; from whence, and from the Act's being to continue but three Years, your Petitioners humbly conceive the same was suffered to lie by probationary, to see whether the said Act, in its Effects, was really advantageous or prejudicial to the *British Trade* and *Interest* in *America*.

That your Petitioners have received Advice, That the Government of *New-York* either have, or are about passing an Act, to revive and continue the said Act for prohibiting all Trade between *New-York* and *Canada*,

Upon which Occasion, your Petitioners humbly beg leave to represent to your Majesty, That the said Act, tho' in the first Intention of it, it might be well designed, yet, in its Effects, it has proved very pernicious to the *British Trade* in general, and to the *Interest* of *New-York* in particular : For, besides the Nations of *Indians* that are in the *English Interest*, there are very many Nations of *Indians*, who are, at present, in the *Interest* of the *French*, and who lie between *New-York*, and the Nations of *Indians* in the *English Interest* ; and this Act prohibiting all Trade between *New-York* and the *French* of *Canada*, or any of the Subjects of *France*, the *French*, and their *Indians*, would not permit the *English Indians* to pass over by their Forts, so as to carry on a free Trade with *New-York*, but prevented

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vented their Passages, as much as possible, whereby that most considerable and only valuable Branch of Trade from *New-York*, hath, ever since the passing the said Act, very much lessened, from the great Difficulties of carrying on any Trade with the *English Indians*, and the Prohibition of all Trade with the *French*; and all the *Indian Goods* have, by this Act, been raised in their Price 25 *l.* to 30 *l.* per *Cent.*

Whereas, on the other hand, this Branch of the *New-York* Trade, by the Discouragements brought upon it by this Act, is almost wholly engrossed by the *French*, who have already, by this Act, been encouraged to send proper *European Goods* to *Canada*, to carry on this Trade; so that should this Act be continued, the *New-York* Trade, which is very considerable, must be wholly lost to us, and center in the *French*.

And your Petitioners further beg leave humbly to represent, That as they conceive nothing can tend more to the with-drawing the Affections of the *Five Nations* of *Indians* from the *English Interest*, than the Continuance of the said Act, which, in its Effects, restrains them from a free Commerce with the Inhabitants of *New-York*, and may, too probably, estrange them from the *English Interest*: Whereas by a Freedom of Commerce, and an encourag'd Intercourse of Trade with the *French*, and their *Indians*, the *English Interest* might, in time, be greatly improved and strengthened among the *Indians* in general, who, by such Latitude of Trade, might be link'd to our Friendship in the strongest Ties of their own Interest, as well as Inclinations.

That therefore, and as the said Act was, in its Effects, so plainly destructive and prejudicial to the Trade and Interest of these Kingdoms, and so much for the Interest of the *French*, and greatly promoted that Mischief which it was intended to prevent,

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Your Petitioners most humbly pray your Majesty, That you would be graciously pleased to give the necessary Directions to your Governour of *New-York*, not to pass any new Act for the reviving or continuing the said Act prohibiting Trade with the *French of Canada*; and that if any such Act, or any Act of the like Tendency, be already passed, that the same may be repealed. *And your Petitioners shall ever pray, &c.*

<i>Samuel Baker,</i>	<i>J. Bull,</i>
<i>Rob. Hackshaw,</i>	<i>Fra. Wilks,</i>
<i>Jo. Lloyds,</i>	<i>Wm. Parkin,</i>
<i>Sam. Storke,</i>	<i>John Gilbert,</i>
<i>J. Baynes,</i>	<i>Jes. Paine, jun.</i>
<i>Sam. Fisch,</i>	<i>Rich. Misco,</i>
<i>Rich. Feneway,</i>	<i>Jo. Miranda,</i>
<i>Jes. Lowe,</i>	<i>Geo. Streetfield,</i>
<i>Alber Levy,</i>	<i>John Everat,</i>
<i>John Paine,</i>	<i>Thompson Hayne.</i>

*At the Court at St. James's the 30th Day  
of April, 1724.*

P R E S E N T

The KING's Most Excellent Majesty in Council.

**U**PON Reading this Day at the Board the humble Petition and Representation of *Samuel Baker, Samuel Storke,* and several others, Merchants of *London*, trading to *New-York*, in behalf of themselves, and the rest of the Persons concern'd in the *New-York Trade*, which *Petition* sets forth, That great Discouragements have been brought upon the *British Trade*, by an Act passed in the said Colony of *New York*, the 19th of *November, 1720*, entitled,

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entitled, *An Act for the Encouragement of the Indian Trade, and rendering of it more beneficial to the Inhabitants of this Province, and for prohibiting the selling of Indian Goods to the French.* And that as the said Act was to continue in force only for three Years, they are informed the Government of *New-York* either have, or are about passing an Act to revive and continue the same; Wherefore they humbly pray, that the Governour of that Colony may be ordered, not to pass any new Act for that purpose, and if any such Act be already pass'd, that it may be repealed.

It is ordered by his Majesty in Council, That the said Petition (a Copy whereof is hereunto annexed) be, and it is hereby referred to the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations, to examine into the same, and report to his Majesty, at this Board, what they conceive fit to be done therein.

Signed,

*James Vernon.*

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*Extract of the Minutes of the Right Honourable the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations, the 7th of July, 1724.*

**M**R. *Sharp* attending, as he had been desired, with several *New-York* Merchants, their Lordships took again into Consideration the Order of Council of the 30th of *April*, mentioned in the Minutes of the first of *May* last, referring to the Board their Petition against the Renewing an Act passed in *New-York*, in *November*, 1720, entitled, *An Act for the Encouragement of the Indian Trade, and rendering of it more effectual to the Inhabitants of this Province, and for prohibiting the selling of*

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Indian Goods to the French. And Mr. *Sharp*, in behalf of the several Merchants, acquainted their Lordships, That he conceived this Act, tho' its Intention of gaining the *Indians* to the *English* Interest might be good, would have quite a contrary Effect, because, if the Trade with the *French* was prevented, and the Merchants should discontinue that with the *Indians*, (as he was informed they would) the *French* might lay hold of this Opportunity to furnish themselves with Goods from *Europe*, and supply the Five Nations of *Indians*, and thereby gain them to their Interest: And this, by reason of their Situation, would not be in the Power of the *English* to prevent: That they were two or three hundred Leagues distant from *Albany*, and that they could not come to trade with the *English* but by going down the River *St. Lawrence*, and from thence through a Lake, which brought them within eighteen Leagues of *Albany*.

And that the *French* having made Settlements along the said River, it would be in their Power, whenever they pleased, to cut off that Communication.

That this Act had been so great a Discouragement to the *British Trade*, in general, that there had not been, by far, so great a Quantity of Beaver, and other Furs, imported into *Great-Britain* since the passing the said Act, as there was before, nor half the Quantity of *European Goods* exported.

That several Merchants who had sent over to *New-York* considerable Quantities of *European Goods*, had received Advice from their Correspondents, That should another Act of the like Nature be passed, they could not find a vent for them, and desired they would send no more.

Upon the whole, Mr. *Sharp* desired, in behalf of the Merchants, that Mr. *Burnet* might be directed not to pass any Act of the like Nature for the future.

To the KING's Most Excellent Majesty.

*May it please your Majesty;*

**I**N Obedience to your Majesty's Commands, signified to us by your Order in Council of the 30th of *April* last, referring to us the Petition of several Merchants of *London*, trading to *New-York*, setting forth "The great Discouragements that have been brought upon the *British Trade* by an Act passed in *New-York* the 19th of *November*, 1720, entitled, *An Act for the Encouragement of the Indian Trade, and rendering of it more beneficial to the Inhabitants of this Province, and for prohibiting the selling of Indian Goods to the French*. And that as the said Act is now expired, the said Merchants are informed the Government of *New-York* either have, or are about passing an Act to revive and continue the same; and therefore pray, that a stop may be put thereto." We humbly take leave to represent to your Majesty,

That we have been attended by the Petitioners, who informed us, that they have found this Act, by Experience, to be so great a Discouragement, to the *British Trade*, that there has not been, by far, so considerable a Quantity of Beaver, and other Furs, imported into *Great-Britain*, from *New-York*, since the passing the said Act, as heretofore; nor half the Quantity of *European Goods* exported thither; in consequence whereof the Price of Furs is raised *Five and Twenty and Thirty per Cent.* to the great Prejudice of several *British Manufactures*.

They likewise affirmed, That it was impracticable to hinder the *French* from supplying the *Indians* with *European Goods*: For tho' *New-York* should not furnish them, the *French* would find another way to be supplied therewith, either from  
some



some other of his Majesty's Plantations, or, it might be, directly from *Europe*. That it was of dangerous Consequence to force this Trade into a new Channel, many of the Goods which the *Indians* want being as easy to be had directly from *France* or *Holland*, as from *Great-Britain*.

They further added, That it was not likely the *Act*, in question, should produce the Effects expected from it, more particularly that of securing the Five *Indian* Nations firmly to the *British* Interest; because, if the *French* should once get a Supply of the Goods necessary for the *Indian* Trade, from any other Place, as the Five *Indian* Nations are settled upon the Banks of the River of *St. Lawrence*, directly opposite to *Quebeck*, two or three hundred Leagues distant from the nearest *British* Settlement in *New-York*, the Vicinity of the *French* would furnish them with the Means of supplying even the *Five Nations* with these Goods, and consequently of alienating their Affections from the *British* Interest. And that there was no Prospect of obtaining a Trade with the *French* *Indians* by this means, because the *French* would always be able to prevent their Passage cross the Lakes and River of *St. Lawrence* to our Settlements.

These were the most material Objections made by the Merchants against the Bill.

On the other hand, the Preamble of the *Act* sets forth, That it was found by Experience, that the *French* of *Canada*, by means of *Indian* Goods brought from that Province, had not only almost wholly engrossed the *Indian* Trade, but had in great Measure, withdrawn the Affections of the *Five Nations* of *Indians* from the Inhabitants of that Province, and rendered them wavering in their Allegiance to your Majesty; and would, if such Trade were not prevented, altogether alienate the Minds of the said *Indians*, which would prove of dangerous

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gerous Consequence to the *English* Interest in *America*.

And Mr. *Burnet*, your Majesty's Governour of *New-York*, informs us, That, since the passing of this Act, several of the *far Indians* had come to *Albany* to trade; That some of them came above one thousand Miles, and are now incorporated with the *Five Nations*: That he had likewise Intelligence of more *far Indians* that design'd to come to *Albany*, which he conceives to have been a good Effect proceeding from this Act: And likewise adds, That he did not doubt but the Cheapness of Goods in *Albany* would induce the *Indians* to trade there, rather than with the *French* at *Montreal*; and that the Traders of *Albany* began to be sensible of their Error in sharing a Trade with the *French*, which they now perceive they can keep wholly to themselves.

Upon the whole, being doubtful of some of the Facts alledged by the Merchants, and considering how far the *British Trade* may be affected by this Act, on the one hand; and how much the Security and Interest of your Majesty's Colonies in *America* may be concerned, on the other, we are humbly of Opinion, That no Directions should be sent to *New-York*, upon the Subject-Matter of this Act, till Mr. *Burnet* shall have been acquainted with the Objections of the Merchants thereto, and his Answers and Observations received thereupon. For which end, if your Majesty shall be graciously pleased, to approve of this our Proposal, we shall forthwith send him Copies both of the Merchants Memorial, and of what Objections they have made before us to the Subject-Matter of this Bill.

Which is most humbly submitted. Signed,

Whitehall,  
July 14. 1724.

J. Cbetwind,		R. Plummer,
T. Pelham,		Ed. Ashe.
M. Bladen,		

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The Report of a Committee of the Council held  
at New-York, November 6, 1724.

May it please your Excellency,

**I**N Obedience to your Excellency's Commands in Council, the 29th of *October*, referring to us a Petition of several Merchants in *London*, presented to the King's most excellent Majesty, against renewing an Act passed in this Province, entitled, *An Act for Encouragement of the Indian Trade, and rendering it more effectual to the Inhabitants of this Province, and for prohibiting the selling of Indian Goods to the French*; as likewise the several Allegations of the said Merchants before the Right Hon. the Lords of Trade and Plantations, we beg Leave to make the following Remarks.

In order to make our Observations the more distinct and clear, we shall gather together the several Assertions of the said Merchants, both in their Petition, and delivered verbally before the Lords of Trade, as to the Situation of this Province, with respect to the *French* and *Indian Nations*; and observe on them, in the first Place, they being the Foundation on which all their other Allegations are grounded. Afterwards we shall lay before your Excellency, what we think necessary to observe on the other parts of the said Petition, in the Order they are in the Petition, or in the Report of the Lords of Trade.

In their geographical Accounts they say, “ Besides the Nations of *Indians* that are in the *English* Interest, there are very many Nations of *Indians*, who are at present in the Interest of the *French*, and who lie between *New-York* and the Nations of *Indians* in the *English* Interest.—  
• “ The *French* and their *Indians* would not permit  
“ the *English* *Indians* to pass over by their Forts.

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The said Act " Restrains them (*the Five Nations*) from a free Commerce with the Inhabitants of *New-York*.

" The *Five Indian Nations* are settled upon the Banks of the River *St. Lawrence*, directly opposite to *Quebeck*, two or three Hundred Leagues distant from the nearest *British* Settlements in *New-York*.

" They (*the Five Nations of Indians*) were two or three Hundred Leagues distant from *Albany*; and that they could not come to trade with the *English* but by going down the River *St. Lawrence*, and from thence through a Lake, which brought them within eighteen Leagues of *Albany*."

These Things the Merchants have thought it safe for them, and consistent with their Duty to his sacred Majesty, to say in his Majesty's Presence, and to repeat them afterwards before the Right Hon. the Lords of Trade, though nothing can be more directly contrary to the Truth. For there are no Nations of *Indians* between *New-York* and the Nations of *Indians* in the *English Interest*, who are now six in Number, by the Addition of the *Tuscaroras*. The *Mohawks* (called *Amies* by the *French*) one of the Five Nations, live on the South-side of a Branch of *Hudson's-River*, (not on the North-side, as they are placed in the *French Maps*) and but forty Miles directly West from *Albany*, and within the *English* Settlements, some of the *English* Farms upon the same River being thirty Miles further West.

The *Oneidas* (the next of the Five Nations) lie likewise West from *Albany*, near the Head of the *Mohawks-River*, about one Hundred Miles from *Albany*.

The *Onondagas* lie about one Hundred and Thirty Miles West from *Albany*. And the *Tuscaroras* live partly with the *Oneidas*, and partly with the *Onondagas*.

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The *Cayugas*, are about one hundred and sixty Miles from *Albany*.

And the *Sennekas* (the furthest of all these Nations) are not above two hundred and forty Miles from *Albany*, as may appear by Mr. *De L'Isle's* Map of *Louisiane*, who lays down the Five Nations under the Name of *Iroquois*.

And Goods are daily carried from this Province to the *Sennekas*, as well as to those Nations that lie nearer, by Water all the Way, except three Miles; (or in the dry Seasons, five Miles) where the Traders carry over Land between the *Mohawks-River* and the *Wood-Creek*, which runs into the *Owasdala-Lake*, without going near either *St. Lawrence-River*; or any of the Lakes upon which the *French* pass; which are entirely out of their Way.

The nearest *French* Forts or Settlements to *Albany*, are *Chambly* and *Monreal*, both of them lying about North and by East from *Albany*, and are near two hundred Miles distant from it. *Quebeck* lies about three hundred and eighty Miles North-East from *Albany*. So far is it from being true, that the Five Nations are situated upon the Banks of the *River St. Lawrence*, opposite to *Quebeck*, that *Albany* lies almost directly between *Quebeck* and the *Five Nations*. And to say that these *Indians* cannot come to trade at *Albany*, but by going down the *River St. Lawrence*, and then into a *Lake* eighteen Leagues from *Albany* (we suppose they mean *Lake Champlain*) passing by the *French* Forts, is to the same Purpose as if they should say, that one cannot go from *London* to *Bristol*, but by Way of *Edinburgh*.

Before we go on to observe other Particulars, we beg Leave further to remark, that it is so far from being true, that the *Indians* in the *French* Interest, lie between *New-York* and our *Five Nations of Indians*, that some of our Nations of *Indians* lie between the *French* and the *Indians*, from whence the  
*French*

*French* bring the far greatest Quantity of their Furs: For the *Sagoyes* (whom the *French* call *Santonons*) are situated between *Lake Erie* and *Cataragui Lake*, (called by the *French* *Ontario*) near the great Fall of *Jagara*, by which all the *Indians* that live round *Lake Erie*, round the Lake of the *Hurons*, round the Lake of the *Illinois*, or *Michigan*, and round the great *Upper Lake*, generally pass in their Way to *Canada*. All the *Indians* situated upon the Branches of the *Mississippi*, must likewise pass by the same Place, if they go to *Canada*. And all of them likewise in their Way to *Canada*, pass by our Trading-Place upon the *Cataragui Lake*, at the Mouth of the *Onondaga River*. The nearest and safest Way of carrying Goods upon the *Cataragui Lake* towards *Canada*, being along the South-side of that Lake, (near where our *Indians* are settled, and our Trade of late is fixed) and not by the North-side and *Cataragui*, or *Frontinac Fort*, where the *French* are settled.

Now that we have represented to your Excellency, that not one Word of the Geography of these Merchants is true, upon which all their Reasoning is founded, it might seem needless to trouble your Excellency with any further Remarks, were it not to show with what earnestness they are promoting the *French Interest*, to the Prejudice of all his Majesty's Colonies in *North America*, and that they are not ashamed of asserting any Thing for that End, even in the Royal Presence.

First, They say, " That by the Act passed in " this Province, entitled, *An Act for Encouragement of the Indian Trade, &c.* All Trade whatsoever is prohibited in the strictest Manner, and " under the severest Penalties, between the Inhabitants of *New-York* Government, and the " *French* of *Canada*."

This is not true, for only carrying Goods to the *French*, which are proper for the *Indian Trade*, is prohibited.

prohibited. The Trade as to other Things, is left in the same State it was before that Act was made, as it will appear to any Person that shall read it: And there are yearly large Quantities of other Goods openly carried to *Canada*, without any Hindrance from the Government of *New-York*. Whatever may be said of the Severity and Penalties in that Act, they are found insufficient to deter some from carrying Goods clandestinely to the *French*; and the Legislature of this Province are convinced that no Penalties can be too severe, to prevent a Trade which puts the Safety of all his Majesty's Subjects of *North America* in the greatest Danger.

Their next Assertion is, *All the Indian Goods have by this Act, been raised 25 l. to 30 l. per Cent.* This is the only Allegation in the whole Petition, that there is any Ground for. Nevertheless, though the common Channel of Trade cannot be altered without some Detriment to it in the Beginning, we are assured from the Custom-house Books, that there has been every Year, since the passing of this Act, more Furs exported from *New-York*, than in the Year immediately before the passing of this Act. It is not probable, that the greatest Difference between the Exportation any Year before this Act, and any Year since, could so much alter the Price of Beaver, as it is found to be this last Year. Beaver is carried to *Britain* from other Parts besides *New-York*; and it is certain that the Price of Beaver is not so much altered here by the Quantity in our Market, as by the Demand for it in *Britain*. But as we cannot be so well informed here, what occasions Beaver to be in greater Demand in *Britain*, we must leave that to be enquired after in *England*. However, we are fully satisfied that it will be found to be for very different Reasons from what the Merchants alledge.

The Merchants go on and say, *Whereas on the other Hand, this Branch of the New-York Trade,*  
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by the Discouragements brought upon it by this Act, is almost wholly engrossed by the French, who have already by this Act, been encouraged to send proper European Goods to Canada, to carry on this Trade, so that should this Act be continued, the New-York Trade which is very considerable, must be wholly lost to us, and center in the French.——Though New-York should not furnish them, the French would find another Way to be supplied therewith, either from some other of his Majesty's Plantations, or it might be directly from Europe.——Many of the Goods which the Indians want being as easy to be had directly from France or Holland, as from Great-Britain.

This is easily answered, by informing your Excellency, that the principal of the Goods proper for the Indian Market are only of the Manufactures of Great-Britain, or of the British Plantations, viz. Strouds, or Stroud-Waters, and other Woollens, and Rum. The French must be obliged to buy all their Woollens (the Strouds especially) in England, and thence carry them to France, in order to their Transportation to Canada. The Voyage to Quebeck through the Bay of St. Lawrence, is well known to be the most dangerous of any in the World, and only practicable in the Summer Months. The French have no Commodities in Canada, by reason of the Cold and Barrenness of the Soil, proper for the West-India Markets, and therefore have no Rum but by Vessels from France, that touch at their Islands in the West-Indies. New-York has, by Reason of its Situation, both as to the Sea and the Indians, every Way the Advantage of Canada. The New-York Vessels make always two Voyages in the Year from England, one in Summer and another in Winter, and several Voyages in a Year to the West-Indies. It is manifest therefore, that it is not in the Power of the French to import any Goods near so cheap to Canada, as they are imported to New-York.

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But to put this out of all Controversy, we need only observe to your Excellency, That Strouds (without which no considerable Trade can be carried on with the *Indians*) are sold at *Albany* for 10*l.* a Piece: They were sold at *Monreal* before this Act took Place, at 13*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* and now they are sold there for 25*l.* and upwards: Which is an evident Proof, that the *French* have not, in these four Years Time (during the Continuance of this Act) found out any other Way to supply themselves with Strouds, and likewise that they cannot trade without them, seeing they buy them at so extravagant a Price.

It likewise appears, that none of the neighbouring Colonies have been able to supply the *French* with these Goods; and those that know the Geography of the Country, know it is impracticable to do it at any tolerable Rate, because they must carry their Goods ten Times further by Land than we need to do.

We are likewise assured, that the Merchants of *Monreal* lately told Mr. *Vaudreuil* their Governor, that if the Trade from *Albany* be not by some Means or other encouraged, they must abandon that Settlement. We have Reason therefore to suspect, that these Merchants (at least some of them) have been practised upon by the *French* Agents in *London*; for no doubt, the *French* will leave no Method untried to defeat the present Designs of this Government, seeing they are more afraid of the Consequences of this Trade between *New-York* and the *Indians*, than of all the warlike Expeditions that ever were attempted against *Canada*.

But to return to the Petitioners, They conceive nothing can tend more to the withdrawing the Affections of the Five Nations of *Indians* from the English Interest, than the Continuance of the said Act, which in its Effects restrains them from a free Commerce with the Inhabitants of *New-York*, and may too probably, estrange

*eftrange them from the English Intereft, whereas by a Freedom of Commerce, and an encouraged Intercourfe of Trade with the French and their Indians, the English Intereft might in Time, be greatly improved and ftrengthened.*

It feems to us a ftrange Argument to fay, that an Act, the whole Purport of which is to encourage our own People to go among the *Indians*, and to draw the far *Indians* through our *Indian Country* to *Albany* (and which has truly produced thefe Effects) would on the contrary, reftain them from a free Commerce with the Inhabitants of *New-York*, and may too probably eftrange them from the *English Intereft*, and therefore that it would be much wifer in us to make ufe of the *French*, to promote the *English Intereft*; and for which End, we ought to encourage a free Intercourfe between them and our *Indians*. The reverfe of this is exactly true, in the Opinion of our *Five Nations*; who in all their publick Treaties with this Government, have reprefented againft this Trade, as *The Building the French Forts with English Strouds*: That the encouraging a Freedom of Commerce with our *Indians*, and the *Indians* round them, who muft pafs through their Country to *Albany*, would certainly increafe both the *English Intereft* and theirs, among all the Nations to the Weftward of them; and that the carrying the *Indian Market* to *Monreal* in *Canada*, draws all the far *Indians* thither.

The laft Thing we have to take Notice, is what the Merchants afferted before the Lords of Trade, *viz.* *That there has not been half the Quantity of European Goods exported fince the paffing of this Act, than ufed to be.*

We are well affured, that this is no better grounded than the other Facts they affert with the fame Pofitivenefs. For it is well known almoft to every Perfon in *New-York*, that there has not been a lefs, but rather a greater Quantity of *European Goods* imported

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imported into this Place, since the passing of this Act, than was at any Time before it, in the same Space of Time. As this appears by the Manifests in the Custom-house here, the same may likewise be easily proved by the Custom-house Books in *London*.

As all the Arguments of the Merchants run upon the ill Effects this Act has had upon the Trade and the Minds of the *Indians*, every one of which we have shown to be asserted without the least Foundation to support them, there nothing now remains, but to show the good Effects this Act has produced, which are so notorious in this Province, that we know not one Person that now opens his Mouth against the Act.

Before this Act passed, none of the People of this Province travelled into the *Indian Countries* to trade: We have now above forty young Men, who have been several Times as far as the Lakes a trading, and thereby become well acquainted, not only with the Trade of the *Indians*, but likewise with their Manners and Languages; and these have returned with such large Quantities of Furs, that greater Numbers are resolved to follow their Example. So that we have good Reason to hope, that in a little Time the *English* will draw the whole *Indian Trade* of the Inland Countries to *Albany*, and into the Country of the *Five Nations*. This Government has built a publick Trading-house upon *Cataraqui Lake*, at *Irondequat* in the *Sennekas* Land, and another is to be built next Spring, at the Mouth of the *Onondagas River*. All the *Indians* pass by these Places, in their Way to *Canada*; and they are not above half so far from the *English* Settlements, as they are from the *French*.

So far is it from being true what the Merchants say, *That the French Forts interrupt all Communication between the Indians and the English*, that if these Places be well supported, as they easily can be from

our Settlements, in case of a Rupture with the *French*, it will be in the Power of this Province, to intercept the greatest Part of the Trade between *Canada* and the *Indians*, round the Lakes and the Branches of the *Mississippi*.

Since this Act passed, many Nations have come to *Albany* to trade, and settle Peace and Friendship, whose Names had not so much as been heard of among us.

In the Beginning of *May* 1723, a Nation of *Indians* came to *Albany* singing and dancing, with their Calumets before them, as they always do when they come to any Place where they have not been before. We do not find that the Commissioners of *Indian* Affairs, were able to inform themselves what Nation this was.

Towards the End of the same Month, eighty Men, besides Women and Children, came to *Albany* in the same Manner. These had one of our Five Nations with them for an Interpreter, by whom they informed the Commissioners, that they were of a great Nation, called *Nebkereages*, consisting of six Castles and Tribes; and that they lived near a Place called by the *French* *Missilimakinak*, between the Upper Lake and the Lake of the *Hurons*. These *Indians* not only desired a free Commerce, but likewise to enter into a strict League of Friendship with us and our *Six Nations*, that they might be accounted the *Seventh Nation* in the League; and being received accordingly, they left their Calumet as a Pledge of their Fidelity.

In *June* another Nation arrived, but from what Part of the Continent we have not learned.

In *July* the *Twigbtwies* arrived, and brought an *Indian* Interpreter of our Nations with them, who told, that they were called by the *French* *Miamies*, and that they live upon one of the Branches of the River *Mississippi*.

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At the same Time some of the *Tabsagrondie Indians*, who live between *Lake Erie* and the Lake of the *Hurons*, near a *French* Settlement, did come and renew their League with the *English*, nor durst the *French* hinder them.

In *July* this Year, another Nation came, whose Situation and Name we know not. And in *August* and *September*, several Parties of the same *Indians* that had been here last Year. But the greatest Numbers of these far *Indians* have been met this Year, in the *Indian* Country by our Traders, every one of them endeavouring to get before another, in order to reap the Profits of so advantageous a Trade, which has all this Summer long, kept about forty Traders constantly employed, in going between our Trading-places in our *Indian* Country, and *Albany*.

All these Nations of *Indians* who came to *Albany*, said, that the *French* had told them many strange Stories of the *English*, and did what they could to hinder their coming to *Albany*, but that they had resolved to break through by Force. The Difference on this Score between the *Tabsagrondie Indians* and the *French* (who have a Fort and Settlement there, called by them *Le Detroit*) rose to that Height this Summer, that Mr. *Fonti* who commanded there, thought it proper to retire, and return to *Canada* with many of his Men.

We are for these Reasons well assured, that this Year there will be more Beaver exported for *Great-Britain*, than ever was from this Province in one Year; and that if the Custom-house Books at *London* be looked into, it will be found, that there will be a far greater Quantity of Goods for the *Indians*, (Strouds especially) sent over next Spring, than ever was at any one Time to this Province; for the Merchants here tell us, that they have at this Time, ordered more of these Goods, than ever was done at any one Time before.

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These Matters of Fact prove beyond Contradiction, that this Act has been of the greatest Service to *New-York*, in making us acquainted with many Nations of *Indians*, formerly entirely unknown and Strangers to us; in withdrawing them from their Dependance upon the *French*, and in uniting them to us and our *Indians*, by Means of Trade and mutual Offices of Friendship. Of what great Consequence this may be to the *British Interest* in general, as to Trade, is apparent to any Body. It is no less apparent likewise, that it is of the greatest Consequence to the Safety of all the *British Colonies* in *North-America*. We feel too sensibly, the ill Effects of the *French Interest* in the present War betwixt *New-England*; and only one Nation of *Indians* supported by the *French*. Of what dismal Consequences then might it be; if the *French* should be able to influence in the same Manner, so many; and such numerous Nations, as lie to the Westward of this Province, *Pennsylvania* and *Maryland*? On the other Hand, if all these Nations (who assure their own Freedom, and declare themselves Friends to those that supply them best with what they want) be brought to have a Dependance upon the *English* (as we have good Reason to hope, in a short Time they will) the *French* of *Canada*, in case of a War, must be at the Mercy of the *English*.

To these Advantages must be added, that many of our young Men having been induced by this Act to travel among the *Indians*, they learn their Manners, their Languages, and the Situation of all their Countries, and become inured to all Manner of Fatigues and Hardships, and a great many more being resolved to follow their Example; these young Men, in case of a War with the *Indians*, will be of ten Times the Service; than the same Number of the common Militia can be of.

The Effects of this Act have likewise so much quieted the Minds of the People, with Respect to

the Security of the Frontiers, that our Settlements are now extended above thirty Miles. further West towards the *Indian* Countries, than they were before it passed.

The only Thing that now remains to answer, is an Objection which we suppose may be made, *What can induce the Merchants of London to petition against an Act, which will be really so much for their Interest in the End?* The Reason is in all Probability, because they only consider their present Gain; and that they are not at all concerned for the Safety of this Country, in encouraging the most necessary Undertaking, if they apprehend their Profit for two or three Years may be lessened by it. This Inclination of the Merchants has been so notorious, that few Nations at War with their Neighbours, have been able to restrain them from supplying their Enemies with Ammunition and Arms. The Count *D'Esbrade*, in his Letters in 1638 says, That when the *Dutch* were besieging *Antwerp*, one *Beiland*, who had loaded four Fly-boats with Arms and Powder for *Antwerp*, being taken up by the Prince of *Orange's* Order, and examined at *Amsterdam*, said boldly, *That the Burgbers of Amsterdam had a Right to trade every where: That he could name a Hundred that were Factors for the Merchants at Antwerp, and that he was one. That Trade cannot be interrupted, and that for his Part he was very free to own, that if to get any Thing by Trade it were necessary to pass through Hell, he would venture to burn his Sails.* When this Principle so common to Merchants, is considered, and that some in this Place have got Estates by trading many Years to *Canada*, it is not to be wondered that they have acted as Factors for *Canada* in this Affair, and that they have transmitted such Accounts to their Correspondents in *London*, as are consistent with the Trust reposed in them by the Merchants of *Canada*.

In the last Place, we are humbly of Opinion, that it may be proper to print the Petition of the Merchants of *London*, and their Allegations before the Lords of Trade, together with the Answers your Committee has made thereto, in Vindication of the Legislature of this Province, of which we have the Honour to be a Part, if your Excellency shall approve of our Answers: That what we have said may be exposed to the Examination of every one in this Place, where the Truth of the Matters of Fact is best known; and that the Correspondents of these Merchants may have the most publick Notice to reply, if they shall think it proper, or to disown in a publick Manner, that they are the Authors of such groundless Informations.

All which is unanimously and humbly submitted, by

*Your Excellency's*

*Most obedient humble Servants,*

<i>R. Walter,</i>	<i>Cadwallader Colden,</i>	
<i>Rip Van Dam,</i>		<i>Ja. Alexander,</i>
<i>John Barberie,</i>		<i>Abraham van Horn,</i>
<i>Fr. Harrison,</i>		

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*A Memorial concerning the Furr-Trade of the Province of New-York.*

*Presented to his Excellency William Burnet, Esq; Captain General and Governor, &c. by Cadwallader Colden, Surveyor General of the said Province, the 10th of November 1724.*

**I**T has of late been generally believed, that the Inhabitants of the Province of *New-York* are soadvantageously situated, with respect to the *Indian Trade*,  
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and enjoy so many Advantages as to Trade in general, that it is in their Power not only to rival the *French* of *Canada*, who have almost entirely engrossed the Furr-Trade of *America*, but that it is impossible for the *French* to carry on that Trade in Competition with the People of this Province. The enquiring into the Truth of this Proposition, may not only be of some Consequence, as to the Riches and Honour of the *British Nation*, (for it is well known how valuable the Furr-Trade of *America* is) but likewise as to the Safety of all the *British Colonies* in *North-America*. *New-France* (as the *French* now claim) extends from the Mouth of the River *Mississippi*, to the Mouth of the River *St. Lawrence*, by which the *French* plainly show their Intention of enclofing the *British Settlements*, and cutting us off from all Commerce with the numerous Nations of *Indians*, that are every where settled over the vast Continent of *North-America*. The *English* in *America* have too good Reason to apprehend such a Design, when they see the *French King's* Geographer publish a Map, by which he has set Bounds to the *British Empire* in *America*, and has taken in many of the *English Settlements* both in *South-Carolina* and *New-York*, within these Boundaries of *New-France*. And the good Services they intend us, with the *Indians*, but too plainly appears at this Day, by the *Indian War* now carried on against *New-England*.

I have therefore for some Time past, endeavour'd to inform myself, from the Writings of the *French*, and from others who have travelled in *Canada*, or among the *Indians*, how far the People of this Province may carry on the *Indian Trade*, with more Advantage than the *French* can; or what Disadvantages they labour under, more than the *French* do. As all Endeavours for the good of ones Country are excusable, I do not doubt but my Intention in this will be acceptable to your Excellency, though I be not capable of treating the Subject as it deserves. I

## FIVE INDIAN NATIONS, &c.

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I shall begin with *Canada*, and consider what Advantages they have either by their Situation, or otherwise. *Canada* is situated upon the River of *St. Lawrence*, by which the five great Lakes (which may properly be called, *The five Inland Seas of North-America*) empty themselves into the Ocean. The Mouth of this great River is in the Lat. of 50 Degrees, overagainst the Body of *Newfoundland*. It rises from the *Cataracui Lake*, (the Easternmost of the five great Lakes) about the Lat. of 44 Degrees, and runs from thence about North-East to the Ocean, and is about nine hundred Miles in Length, from that Lake to the Ocean. The five great Lakes which communicate with each other, and with this River, extend about one thousand Miles Westward, further into the Continent. So far the *French* have already discovered, and their Discoveries make it probable, that an Inland Passage may be found to the *South-Sea*, by the Rivers which run into these Lakes, and Rivers which run into the *South-Sea*.

The Method of carrying Goods upon the Rivers of *North-America*, into all the small Branches, and over Land, from the Branches of one River to the Branches of another, was learned from the *Indians*, and is the only Method practicable through such large Forests and Deserts as the Traders pass thro', in carrying from one Nation to another, it is this; the *Indians* make a long narrow Boat, made of the Bark of the Birch-tree, the Parts of which they join very neatly. One of these Canoes that can carry a Dozen Men, can itself be easily carried upon two Men's Shoulders; so that when they have gone as far by Water as they can (which is further than is easily to be imagined, because their loaded Canoes don't sink six Inches into the Water) they unload their Canoes, and carry both Goods and Canoes upon their Shoulders over Land, into the nearest Branch of the River they intend to follow.

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Thus, the *French* have an easy Communication with all the Countries bordering upon the River of *St. Lawrence*, and its Branches, with all the Countries bordering upon these In-land Seas; and the Rivers which empty themselves into these Seas, and can thereby carry their Burdens of Merchandize thro' all these large Countries, which could not by any other means than Water-carriage be carried thro' so vast a Tract of Land.

This, however, but half finishes the View the *French* have, as to their Commerce in *North-America*. Many of the Branches of the River *Mississippi* come so near to the Branches of several of the Rivers which empty themselves into the great Lakes, that in several Places there is but a short Land-Carriage from the one to the other. As soon as they have got into the River *Mississippi*, they open to themselves as large a Field for Traffick in the southern Parts of *North-America*, as was before mentioned with respect to the northern Parts. If one considers the Length of this River, and its numerous Branches, he must say, *That by means of this River, and the Lakes, there is opened to his View such a Scene of inland Navigation as cannot be parallel'd in any other Part of the World.*

The *French* have, with much Industry, settled small Colonies, and built stockaded Forts at all the considerable Passes between the Lakes, except between *Cataracui Lake* (called by the *French* *Ontario*) and *Lake Erie*, one of our Five Nations of *Indians*, whom we call *Sennekas*, (and the *French* *Sonontouans*) having hitherto refused them leave to erect any Buildings there.

The *French* have been indefatigable in making Discoveries, and carrying on their Commerce with Nations, of whom the *English* know nothing but what they see in the *French* Maps and Books. The Barrenness of the Soil, and the Coldness of the Climate of *Canada*, obliges the greatest number of  
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the Inhabitants to seek their living by travelling among the *Indians*, or by trading with those that do travel. The Governor, and other Officers, have but a scanty Allowance from the King, and could not subsist were it not by the Perquisites they have from this Trade; neither could their Priests find any means to satisfy their Ambition and Luxury without it: So that all Heads and Hands are employ'd to advance it, and the Men of best Parts think it the surest way to advance themselves by travelling among the *Indians*, and learning their Languages; even the Bigotry and Enthusiasm of some hot Heads has not been a little useful in advancing this Commerce; for that Government having prudently turn'd the Edge of the Zeal of such hot Spirits upon converting the *Indians*, many of them have spent their Lives under the greatest Hardships, in endeavouring to gain the *Indians* to their Religion, and to love the *French Nation*, while, at the same time, they are no less industrious to represent the *English* as the *Enemies of Mankind*. So that the whole Policy of that Government, both civil and religious, is admirably turn'd to the general Advancement of this Trade. Indeed the Art and Industry of the *French*, especially that of their religious Missions, has so far prevail'd upon all the *Indians* in *North-America*, that they are every where directed by *French Councils*. Even our own *Five Nations*, (the *Iroquois*) who formerly were mortal Enemies of the *French*, and have always liv'd in the strictest Amity with the *English*, have, of late, (by the Practices of the *French Priests*) been so far gain'd, that several of the *Mohawks*, who live nearest the *English*, have left their Habitations, and are gone to settle near *Monreal* in *Canada*; and all the rest discover a Dread of the *French Power*. That much of this is truly owing to the *Priests*, appears from many of the Sachems of the *Iroquois* wearing Crucifixes when they come to *Albany*: And those

*Mohawk*

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*Mississipi* Indians that are gone to *Canada*, are now commonly known, both to the *French* and *English*, by the Name of *The Praying Indians*, it being customary for them to go through the Streets of *Monreal* with their Beads, praying and begging Alms.

But notwithstanding all these Advantages, the *French* labour under Difficulties that no Art or Industry can remove. The Mouth of the River of *St. Lawrence*, and more especially the Bay of *St. Lawrence*, lies so far North, and is thereby so often subject to tempestuous Weather and thick Fogs, that the Navigation there is very dangerous, and never attempted but during the Summer Months. The Wideness of this Bay, together with the many strong Currents that run in it, the many Shelves, and funkken Rocks that are every where spread over both the Bay and River, and the want of Places for anchoring in the Bay, all increase the Danger of this Navigation; so that a Voyage to *Canada* is justly esteem'd much more dangerous than to any other Part of *America*. The many Shipwrecks that happen in this Navigation, are but too evident Proofs of the Truth of this, particularly the Miscarriage of the last Expedition against *Canada*. The Channel is so difficult, and the Tides so strong, that as soon as their Shipping get into the River, they never attempt to sail in the Night, tho' the Wind be fair, and the Weather good. These Difficulties are so considerable, that the *French* never attempt above one Voyage in a Year to *Europe*, or the *West-Indies*, tho' it be really nearer *Europe* than any of the *English Colonies*, where the Shipping that constantly use the Trade, always make two Voyages in the Year.

The Navigation between *Quebeck* and *Monreal* is likewise very dangerous and difficult: The Tide rises about 18 or 20 Feet at *Quebeck*, which occasions so strong a Stream, that a Boat of six Oars cannot make way against it: The River in many Places very wide, and the Channel at the same time narrow

narrow and crooked; there are many Shelves and sunken Rocks, so that the best Pilots have been deceived; for which reason the Vessels that carry Goods to *Monreal* are always obliged to anchor before Night, tho' both Wind and Tide be fair. The Flood goes no further than *Trois Rivières*, half way to *Monreal*, and about ninety Miles from *Quebeck*: After they pass this Place they have a strong Stream always against them, which requires a fair Wind and a strong Gale to carry the Vessels against the Stream. And they are obliged in this Part of the River, as well as under the *Trois Rivières*, to come to an anchor at Night, though the Wind be good. These Difficulties make the common Passages take up three or four Weeks, and sometimes six Weeks; tho' if they have the chance of a Wind to continue so long, they may run it in five or six Days.

After they pass *Monreal* they have a strong Stream against them till they come near the Lakes; so that in all that, which is about one hundred and fifty Miles in Length, they force their Canoes forward with setting Poles, or drag them with Ropes along shoar; and at five or six different Places in that way the River falls over Rocks with such Force, that they are obliged to unload their Canoes, and carry them upon their Shoulders. They never make this Voyage from *Monreal* to *Cataracui* in less than twenty Days, and frequently, twice that Time is necessary.

Now we are come so far as the Lake, my Design leads me no further, for at this Lake all the *far Indians*, that go to *Canada*, must pass by our Traders. And from thence the Road to the *Indian Countries* is the same from *Albany* that it is from *Monreal*.

Besides these Difficulties in the Transportation, the *French* labour under greater in the purchasing of the principal Goods proper for the *Indian Market*; for the most considerable and most valuable

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Part of their Cargo consists in *Strouds, Duffils, Blankets,* and other *Woollens,* which are bought at a much cheaper Rate in *England* than in *France.* The *Strouds* (which the *Indians* value more than any other Cloathing) are only made in *England,* and must be transported into *France* before they can be carried to *Canada.* *Rum* is another considerable Branch of the *Indian Trade,* which the *French* have not, by reason they have no Commodities in *Canada* fit for the *West India* Market. This they supply with *Brandy,* at a much dearer Rate than *Rum* can be purchased at *New-York,* tho' of no more Value with the *Indians.* Generally, all the Goods used in the *Indian Trade,* except *Gun-Powder,* and a few *Trinkets,* are sold at *Monreal* for twice their Value at *Albany.* To this likewise must be added, the necessity they are under of laying the whole Charge of supporting their Government on the *Indian Trade.* I am not particularly informed of their Duties or Imposts, but I am well assured, that they commonly give six or seven hundred *Livres* for a Licence for one *Canoe,* in proportion to her Largeness, to go with her Loading into the *Indian Country* to trade.

I shall next consider the Advantages the Inhabitants of *New-York* have in carrying on this Trade. In the first place, the Ships that constantly use the Trade to *England,* perform their Voyage to and from *London* twice every Year; and those that go to *Bristol* (the Port from whence the greatest part of the Goods for the *Indian Trade* are exported) frequently return in four Months. These Goods are bought much cheaper in *England* than in *France:* They are transported in less Time, with less Charge, and much less Risque, as appears by the *Premio* for Insurance between *London* and *New-York,* being only *Two per Cent.* Goods are easily carried from *New-York* to *Albany,* up *Hudson's River,* the Distance being only 140 Miles, the River very strait all the way, and bold, and very free from Sandbanks,

banks, as well as Rocks ; so that the Vessels always sail as well by Night as by Day, and have the Advantage of the Tide upwards as well as downwards, the Flood flowing above *Albany*. It may therefore be safely concluded, that all sorts of Goods can be carried to *Albany* at a cheaper Rate than they can be to *Quebeck*, which is also three times further from the *Indian Country* than *Albany* is. To put the Truth of this out of all dispute, I need only observe what is well known both at *New-York* and *Albany*, viz. That almost all the Strouds carried by the *French* into the *Indian Countries*, as well as large Quantities of other Goods, for the Use of the *French* themselves, are carried from *Albany* to *Monreal*. There has been an Account kept of nine hundred Pieces of Strouds transported thither in one Year, besides other Commodities of very considerable Value. The Distance between *Albany* and *Monreal* is about two hundred Miles, all by Water, except twelve Miles between *Hudson's River* and the *Wood-Creek*, where they carry their Bark Canoes over Land, and about sixteen Miles between *Cbambly* and *La Prairie*, over-against *Monreal*. And tho' the Passage be so short and easy, these Goods are generally sold at double their Value in *Albany*.

But as this Path has been thought extremely prejudicial to the Interest of this Colony, I shall leave it, and go on to another, that leads directly from *Albany* into the *Cataracui* or *Ontario Lake*, without going near any of the *French* Settlements.

From *Albany* the *Indian Traders* commonly carry their Goods sixteen Miles over Land, to the *Mohawks River* at *Schenectady*, the Charge of which Carriage is *Nine Shillings New-York Money*, or *Five Shillings Sterling* each Waggon-Load. From *Schenectady* they carry them in Canoes up the *Mohawks River*, to the Carrying-place between the *Mohawks River*, and the River which runs into the *Oneida Lake*; which Carrying-place between is only three

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Miles long, except in very dry Weather, when they are obliged to carry them two Miles further. From thence they go with the Current down the *Onondaga River* to the *Cataracui Lake*. The Distance between *Albany* and the *Cataracui Lake* (this Way) is nearly the same with that between *Albany* and *Monreal*; and likewise with that between *Monreal* and the *Cataracui Lake*, and the Passage much easier than the last, because the Stream of the *Mohawks River* is not near so strong as the *Cataracui River* between the *Lake* and *Monreal*, and there is no Fall in the River, save one short one; whereas there are (as I have said) at least five in the *Cataracui River*, where the Canoes must be unloaded. Therefore it plainly follows, that the *Indian Goods* may be carried at as cheap a Rate from *Albany* to the *Cataracui Lake*, as from *Albany* to *Monreal*. So that the People of *Albany* plainly save all the Charge of carrying Goods two hundred Miles from *Monreal* to that Part of the *Cataracui Lake*, which the *French* have to carry before they bring them to the same Place from *Monreal*, besides the Advantage which the *English* have in the Price of their Goods.

I have said, That when we are in the *Cataracui Lake*, we are upon the Level with the *French*, because here we can meet with all the *Indians* that design to go to *Monreal*. But besides this Passage by the *Lakes*, there is a River which comes from the Country of the *Sennekas*, and falls into the *Onondaga River*, by which we have an easy Carriage into that Country, without going near the *Cataracui Lake*. The Head of this River goes near to *Lake Erie*, and probably may give a very near Passage into that Lake, much more advantageous than the Way the *French* are obliged to take by the great Fall of *Jagara*, because narrow Rivers are much safer for Canoes than the *Lakes*, where they are obliged to go ashore if there be any Wind upon the Water. But as this Passage depends upon a  
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further Discovery, I shall say nothing more of it at this time.

Whoever then considers these Advantages *New-York* has of *Canada*, in the first buying of their Goods, and in the safe, speedy, and cheap Transportation of them from *Britain* to the *Lakes*, free of all manner of Duty or Imposts, will readily agree with me, that the Traders of *New-York* may sell their Goods in the *Indian Countries* at half the Price the People of *Canada* can, and reap twice the Profit they do. This will admit of no Dispute with those that know that Strouds (the Staple *Indian Commodity*) this Year are sold for *Ten Pounds* apiece at *Albany*, and at *Monreal* for *Twenty-five Pounds*, notwithstanding the great Quantity of Strouds said to be brought directly into *Quebeck* from *France*, and the great Quantities that have been clandestinely carried from *Albany*. It cannot therefore be denied that it is only necessary for the Traders of *New-York* to apply themselves heartily to this Trade, in order to bring it wholly into their own Hands; for in every thing besides Diligence, Industry, and enduring Fatigues, the *English* have much the Advantage of the *French*. And all the *Indians* will certainly buy, where they can, at the cheapest Rate.

It must naturally be objected, *That if these things are true, how is it possible that the Traders of New-York should neglect so considerable and beneficial Trade for so long time?*

In answering this Objection, I shall show the Difficulties *New-York* has labour'd under, by giving a short History of the Country, so far as it relates to this Trade. Which Method, I think, can be liable to the least Objection, and put the whole in the truest Light.

When this Country (the Province of *New-York*) came first under the Crown of *Great-Britain*, our *Five Nations* of *Indians* were mortal Enemies of the *French* at *Canada*, and were in a continual War with

them, and all the *Nations* of *Indians* round the *Lakes*; so that then it was not safe for the *Englisb* to travel further than the Countries of the *Five Nations*; nor would our *Indians* permit the *far Indians* (with whom they had constant War) to pass thro' their Countries to *Albany*. Besides, the *Five Nations* of *Indians* were at that time so numerous, (consisting of ten times the Number of fighting Men they now do) that the Trade with them alone was very considerable for so young and small a Colony. In the latter End of King *Charles's* Reign, when the *Duke of York*, and *Papish Councils* prevail'd, the Governor of *New-York* (who was likewise a *Papist*) had Orders to use all his Endeavours to make up a Peace between our Nations (the *Iroquois*) and the *French*; and that he should persuade the *Five Nations* to admit *French Priests* among them, in order to civilize them. The Consequence of which was, that the *French* thereby obtained a free Commerce upon the *Lakes*, and obtain'd leave to build *Cataracui Fort* upon the North-side of *Cataracui Lake*, and have two Vessels of Force upon the same Lake. From this Time, during all King *James's* Reign, the *French*, whenever they had any Differences with our *Five Nations*, threaten'd, that the *Englisb* of *New-York* would join with them, and destroy the *Five Nations*; by which, and the Practices of the *French Priests*, our *Five Nations* became very much alienated in their Affections from the *Englisb*, and look'd upon them as a People depending upon the *French*. The Consequences of this appeared so dangerous to Colonel *Dungan*, the Governor of *New-York*, (though, as I have said, a *Papist*) that he again and again complain'd to his Master of the ill Offices the *French Priests* did the *Englisb* among our *Nations*. When the *Englisb* had thus procur'd a Peace for the *French*, they thought they might justly reap some Advantage from it; and it's hardly to be doubted but that they had Promises of that kind.

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They were therefore encouraged to send forty Men, with great Quantities of Goods, into the *Lakes*, under the Command of Major *McGregory*, to trade with the *far Nations*. At this time Mr. *Denonville*, Governor of *Canada*, was gathering together all the Force of *Canada*, and of the *Indians*, (Enemies of the *Five Nations*) in order to surprize the *Five Nations*, and destroy them, at the Time they thought themselves secure by the Peace so lately made. Major *McGregory*, and his Company, were met by a *French* Officer on *Lake Erie*, coming with a great Number of Men to the general Rendezvous of the *French*, and he, with all the *English*, were made Prisoners. They were used with such Severity as has never been practis'd between *Christian Nations* in open War, tho' the two Crowns, at that time, were not only at Peace, but under the strictest Ties of mutual Friendship; for the *French* used these People as Slaves in building *Cataraqui Fort*, and a poor *Frenchman* that had conducted them, was publicly shot to Death, as if he had brought an Enemy into their Country. Such was their Apprehensions then of the *English* getting any Footing among the *Indians*.

The *French* Governor surprized a Village of the *Five Nations*, who, on the *French* Faith, liv'd in great Security, but seven or eight Leagues from the *French* Fort, and sent these miserable People to the Gallies in *France*. He afterwards fell upon the *Sennekas*, and burnt their Villages, but without any Advantage to the *French*, they having lost more Men than the *Indians* did. This renew'd the War with greater Fury than ever, between the *French* and our *Indians*. For some time afterwards, our *Indians*, in a great Body, fell upon the Island of *Monreal*, while Mr. *Denonville* was in the Town: They burnt and destroy'd all the Villages and Houses round *Monreal*, and kill'd some hundreds of Men, Women, and Children. Afterwards they came

into the open Fields before *Monreal*, and there defy'd the *French* Governor, who did not think it proper to fight them. And when they had done all the Mischief they could, they retir'd without any Loss.

About this Time the Revolution happen'd in *Great-Britain*, which was succeeded by a War between *Great-Britain* and *France*. In *February, 1678*, a Party of three hundred Men, consisting of equal Numbers of *French* and *Indians*, surprized *Sebecbtady* in the Night-time, when the poor People were in their Beds, in the greatest Security, where they barbarously murdered sixty-three Men, Women, and Children, in cold Blood, laid the Village in Ashes, and then retir'd, without reaping any other Advantage besides this cruel Revenge on innocent People, for the Mischief our *Indians* had done them. This rais'd a cruel War between the two Colonies, in which there was much Mischief done, and Blood shed, without any Advantage to either side.

In Time of this War, the *most Christian King's* Governor of *Canada* was so much provok'd, that he thought fit to follow the Example of our barbarous *Indians*, and burn his *Indian Prisoners* alive, in the most cruel Manner, in sight of all the Inhabitants of *Quebeck*, and to deliver up the *English Prisoners* to the *French Indians*, who indeed had more Mercy, for they kill'd none of them.

King *William's* Peace put an End to this War; but the Peace lasted so short a while, that the People of this Province hardly had time to re-settle their Farms on the Frontiers, which they had deserted in the Time of the War, much less to adventure trading in the *Indian Countries*, so lately the Scene of so much Cruelty. But both Colonies having now an Abhorrence of the Cruelties of the last War, agreed on a kind of Neutrality for the *Indians*, during *Queen Anne's* War, in which Time we lost much ground with our own *Indians*: For the *French* having learn'd, by dear Experience, that  
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it was not possible for them to conquer *our Five Indian Nations*, resolv'd to try all Means to gain their Affections, and in this Art the *French* are always more successful than in that of War; and the *English* failing in two ill-concerted Expeditions against *Canada*, the *Indians* lost much of the Opinion they had of the *English* Power and Valour.

In Time of this last War, the clandestine Trade to *Monreal* began to be carried on by *Indians*, from *Albany* to *Monreal*. This gave Rise to the *Kabnaga*, or *Praying Indians*, who are entirely made up of Deserters from the *Mohawks* and *River Indians*, and were either enticed thither by the *French* Priests, or by our Merchants, in order to carry Goods from *Albany* to *Monreal*, or run away for some Mischief done here. These *Indians* now consist of about eighty fighting Men, and live about four Leagues above *Monreal*: They neither plant nor hunt, but depend chiefly upon this private Trade for their Subsistence. These *Indians*, in time of War, gave the *French* Intelligence of all Designs here against them: By them likewise the *French* engaged our *Five Nations* in a War with the *Indians* Friends of *Virginia*, and from them we might expect the greatest Mischief in Time of War, seeing every Part of the Province is as well known to them as to any of the Inhabitants. But if this Trade was entirely at an end, we have reason to believe, that these *Indians* would return to their own Tribes, for they then could not long subsist where they now are.

As soon as the Peace was proclaim'd, an open Trade with *Monreal* was carried on with such Earnestness, that *Monreal* was fill'd with *Indian Goods*, and *Albany* exhausted; by which means *Monreal* became the principal, if not the only *Indian Market*, and the *Indians* depended entirely on the *French* for what they wanted.

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Our Merchants were fond of the *Canada* Trade, because they sold large Quantities of Goods without any Trouble, the *French* taking them from their Doors; whereas the Trade with the *Indians* is carried on with a great deal of Toil and Fatigue; and as to the Interest of the Country, they either never thought any thing about it, or if they did, had no regard to it.

Now I have brought this Account to the Time your Excellency arriv'd; what has happen'd since, your Excellency knows better than I can by any means inform you. From the whole, it seems plain, that any Difficulties and Disadvantages this Province has been under, have only proceeded from the Wars, which have continued since the first settling of the Province, to the beginning of the last general Peace. But now, that not only *this Province*, but likewise our *six Nations* of *Indians* are at Peace, and in Amity, both with the *French*, and all the *Indian Nations* with whom we can have any Commerce, these Difficulties are all remov'd, and we now enjoy the most favourable Time, that at any time can be hoped for, in order to extend the *British Commerce* in *North-America*, while the *French* not only labour under the Difficulties which I have shown to be inseparable from the Situation of their Colony, but likewise under another Disadvantage, (not before taken notice of) by the Furr-Trade of *Canada* being restrain'd to one Company. This Company is obliged to pay heavy Duties in *France* upon the Importation of Beaver, or any other Furr; for which reason they always fix a Price upon Beaver, and their other Furrs, in *Canada*; and the *Indian Traders* of *Canada* being restrain'd from selling to any but the Company's Agents there, they cannot raise the Price of *Indian Goods* as the Price of *European* rise, or as their Profit on the Goods they sell to the *Indians* is lessen'd.

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The Merchants of *New-York* allow our *Indian* Traders double the Price for Beaver, that the *French* Company allow their *Indian* Traders, the Price established by the Company for Beaver, in *Canada*, being two Livres, or *eighteen Pence Sterling*, the Pound-weight; and the current Price of Beaver in *New-York* being *five Shillings New-York Money*, or *three Shillings Sterling* the Pound-weight. Therefore it plainly follows, that our *Indian* Traders could under-sell the *French* Traders, tho' they were to give as great a Price for *European Goods* as the *French* do, and did transport them at as great Charge, because of the double Price they have for their Furs in *New-York*.

But as our *Indian* Traders not only have a double Price for their *Indian Goods*, but likewise buy the Goods they sell to the *Indians*, at half the Price the *French Indian* Traders do, the *French* Traders must be ruin'd by carrying on this Trade, in Competition with the *English* of *New-York*. And the *French Indian* Traders had been ruin'd before now, if they had not found means to carry their Beaver to *Albany*, where they got double the Price they must have fold for in *Canada*.

It may be objected, against this Argument, *That the Canada Company as soon as they find that the Traders cannot sell at their established Price, will allow a greater Price.* But if we consider the Duties the *French Company* is obliged to pay to the King, they cannot allow so great a Price as the *English* can at *New-York*. And if it should be insisted, *That the French Company may obtain a Remission of those*, yet if the clandestine Trade with *Albany* be entirely stopt, the *French* Traders will be ruin'd before such Remission can be obtain'd, and their Trade will be at an end.

My Inclination led me to show what Advantages not only the *Indian Trade* would reap by extending  
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our Frontiers as far as the Lakes, but likewise the *British Trade* in some other Branches, which the Parliament of *Great-Britain* seem to have much at heart, *viz. Naval Stores*; for the Soil on both Sides of the *Mohawks River* being as rich as it is possible (I believe) for any Land to be, will be found the most proper for raising of HEMP, of any Part of *America*, and the whole Country round it being full of the largest Pines, the royal Navy is as likely to be well provided with MASTS there, and at as cheap a rate as any where else. But I have already too far presum'd on your Excellency's Patience.

*Cadwallader Colden.*

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To this it may not be improper to add the following Original Letter.

*From J. A. Esq; to Mr. P. C. of London, showing the Success of the Measures taken at that Time.*

*S I R,*

*New-York, 1740.*

**I**F you should be at the Pains to read these printed Papers, it will be a Pleasure to you to hear of the Success of the Measures taken by Governor *Burnet* for redeeming the *Indian Trade* out of the Hands of the *French*. He has succeeded far above our Expectations.

Governor *Burnet*, through his earnest Application, and at first chiefly with his Money, Credit, and Risque, erected a Trading-House and Fortification at the Mouth of the *Onondagues River*, called *Osneigo*, where the Province of *New-York* supports a Garrison of Soldiers, consisting of a Lieutenant and twenty Men, which are yearly relieved.

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At this Place a very great Trade is carried on with the remote *Indians*, who formerly used to go down to the *French* at *Monreal*, and there buy our *English* Goods, at second Hand, at above twice the Price they now pay for them at *Osneigo*; whilst, at the same time, the *French* were chiefly supplied by one Gentleman at *New-York*, who almost entirely engrossed the *Indian* Trade of this Province, and thereby acquired a very great Estate and Influence. But the prudent Steps taken by our late worthy Governor, to open a free Trade, was the Cause of the Engrosser's losing his. — The Probability of doing this, was the principal Motive of our applying to the King, which is shown by these printed Papers.

The *Indian* Trade, to the great Advantage of this Province, is now divided into several hundred Hands, and there have been for many Years past upwards of one hundred young Men of this Province, who have gone yearly among the *Indians*, to supply them with our Goods.

By this means, at a modest Estimate, I am assured, that the *Indian* Trade of this Province is now far above five times as much as when Governor *Burnet* began to put his Scheme in execution.

And this is not all the Advantages reaped thereby, but a much more considerable one to this, and all the other *English* Colonies is, that not only our own six Nations, but also many far and remote *Indian* Nations are drawn off from their Dependence on the *French*, and made, by Trade and Intercourse, dependant on the *English*; by this means a great Security and Protection is acquired by the *English*, in case of a War with *France*; and by this Trade our Settlements in this Province are extended up to the *Onondagues* Carrying-place, which is now well attended with Waggons, for the more commodious transporting of Goods to trade in the Lakes.

And.

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And they are now settling on the Branches of *Sasquebanab* River; and from the western Branches of this River, there is but a small Land-Carriage to *Allegbony*, a Branch of that great River *Mississippi*; which Branch extending a thousand Miles from its Mouth, where it enters the said River; and which joins so near to our Settlements, as is above taken notice of, opens us a Trade to that vast Country, called by the *French Louisiana*, which they possess on the *Mississippi*.

I am,

S I R,

*Your humble Servant,*

J. A.



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