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Indians: Traders

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INDIAN TRADERS - THEIR REPUTED, AND THEIR TRUE CHARACTER.

*and references
to traders*

About two hundred years have elapsed since Minnesota was first explored by white men. Two Frenchmen, long before the visit of Father Hennepin to the Falls of St. Anthony, had reached the region of lakes lying westward from Lake Superior. How far they penetrated towards the sources of the Mississippi we know not, as the information we possess, relative to their movements, is very limited. They were Indian traders, the pioneers of that bold and hardy class of men, who, despising the comforts and the seductions of civilized life, have, since that period, explored the recesses of our forests, and the wide expanse of our prairies, and gazed with rapture upon the beauty and magnificence of our lakes, while they have extended the influence of the children of Japhet, far and wide among the tribes of the Northwest.

Canada was the principal nursery of this class of adventurers, who, fascinated by the unrestrained liberty of action offered by the trade with Indians, and by the novelty / ⁴⁶³ connected with it, entered upon the vocation with great ardor. Stimulated less by a prospect of gain than by the excitement of new scenes, and the hope of new discoveries, the Indian trader was arrested by no difficulties or dangers, discouraged by no fatigue or exposure, from the accomplishments of the object he had in view. Perhaps no body of men have ever been so misunderstood and misrepresented as those of which he formed a component part. To them have been ascribed not only all the evils and outrages that are the accompaniments of extreme frontier life, where law is unfelt and unknown, but they have been charged with fraud and villainy of every conceivable description. The very