

**OBSERVATIONS ON THE INHABITANTS,
CLIMATE, SOIL, RIVERS, PRODUCTIONS,
ANIMALS;
IN TRAVELS FROM PENSILVANIA TO
ONONDAGO, OSWEGO AND THE LAKE
ONTARIO, IN CANADA**

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Observations on the Inhabitants, Climate, Soil, Rivers, Productions, Animals; In Travels from Pensilvania to Onondago, Oswego and the Lake Ontario, in Canada by Pehr Kalm & John Bartram

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PEHR KALM & JOHN BARTRAM

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LAKE ONTARIO, IN CANADA**

Lucien Carr
Cambridge

1895

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

*Inhabitants, Climate, Soil, Rivers, Productions,
Animals, and other matters worthy of Notice.*

MADE BY

Mr. JOHN BARTRAM,

In his Travels from

PENSILVANIA

TO

ONONDAGO, OSWEGO and the Lake ONTARIO,

In CANADA.

To which is annex'd, a curious Account of the

CATARACTS at *NIAGARA*.

By Mr. PETER KALM,

A *Swedish* GENTLEMAN who travelled there.



LONDON:

Printed for J. WHISTON and B. WHITE, in
Fleet-Street, 1751.



P R E F A C E .

THE following Journal was kept by Mr. *John Bartram*, in his travels from his own house near *Philadelphia* to *Onondago*, and *Oswego* on the *Cadarakin* or *Ontario Lake*. It is a misfortune to the publick, that this ingenious person had not a liberal education, it is no wonder therefore, that his stile is not so clear as we could wish, however, in every piece of his, there are evident marks of much good sense, penetration, and sincerity, join'd to a commendable curiosity. It was to gratify this disposition, and that of his correspondents request in *England*, that he undertook, after other expeditions, to accompany Mr. *Weiss* on the business of the government, and was honoured with the encouragement of some very judicious and generous noblemen *here*, since dead, and the friendship of the skilfullest botanists in *Europe*.

It may be proper to inform the reader, that the negotiations set on foot in the conferences here related, produced a congress at *Lancaster* in *Pensylvania*, begun the 22d of *June* following, which was attended with the wish'd for success, in an amicable adjustment of all differences between the parties, under the mediation of the governor of *Pensylvania*. This treaty was printed

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ed the same year at *Philadelphia*, and is to be found in Mr. *Golden's history of the 5 Indian Nations*. A book worthy of the readers perusal.

This journal was by several accidents prevented from arriving in *England* till *June 1750*, and is now made publick without the author's knowledge, at the instance of several gentlemen, who were more in number than could conveniently peruse the manuscript. Had he intended it for publication he would have made it probably more entertaining and perhaps have retrenched some parts that made the least figure in it.

The friend to whom he sent it, though himself not at liberty to make any material alteration, though as it now appears, many who seek only amusement in what they read, will in those places be disappointed where only are treated of the several plants with which nature has bountifully covered the hills and valleys he travers'd, with the various qualities of the soil and climate.

But when it is consider'd of how great importance an intimate acquaintance with the natural state of this vast wilderness, and its capacity of further improvement is to *Great Britain*, and how little the endeavours of our countrymen have yet advanced this work, while we are indebted to our most dangerous rivals for the little we do know, who will, if possible, repay themselves by excluding us from all we do not actually cultivate, and leave us *that only* while they want power to take it from us: I cannot
but

but think this plain yet sensible piece merits attention. It is by pursuing the discovery of the interior state of this great continent, that we can scarcely fail attaining an end, that most worthy the aim of a great maritime power, honored as well as strengthened by a fair progeny of the most flourishing colonies in the world, and of which a good *Englishman* with peculiar pleasure will find *P. Charlevoix* confessing (however unwilling to own any thing inconsistent with the glory of his country) that France cannot behold them without Terror.

Knowledge must precede a settlement, and when *Pensilvania* and *Virginia* shall have extended their habitations to the branches of the *Mississippi* that water these provinces, on the west side of the *Blue Mountain*, we may reasonably hope to insure a safe and easy communication with the most remote known parts of *North America*, and to secure the possession of a dominion unbounded by any present discoveries.

If this desirable prospect appear chimerical, because great and distant, it is at least true, that no obstacle can be pointed out, but what we may easily remove.

England already possesses an uninterrupted line of well-peopled provinces of the coast, successively begun within less than 150 years, she sees them every year augmented by an accession of subjects, excited by the desire of living under governments and laws formed on the most excellent model upon earth. In vain do we look for

an equal prosperity among the plantations of other *European* nations because every power has transplanted its constitution with its people. This surprizing increase of people is a foundation that will bear a mighty superstructure, we need no other proof than in the wonderful growth of one of the provinces, (*Pensilvania* I mean) which tho' the youngest of all, yet being more particularly founded on the principles of moderation (*the first of all political Virtues*) and every way fam'd for the wisdom and lenity of its government, is become the admiration of those who compare it with any thing related by history, and the well-known refuge of—the *oppress'd and persecuted*, who cheerfully abandon their native soil to purchase the inestimable blessing of liberty and peace.

The inhabitants of all these colonies have eminently deserved the character of industrious in agriculture and commerce. I could wish they had as well deserved that of *adventurous in inland discoveries*, in this they have been much outdone by *another Nation*, whose poverty of country and unfettled temper have prompted them to such views of extending their possessions, as our agriculture and commerce now make necessary for us to imitate. In this skillful Persons may employ themselves; but a more accurate observer than our author will not readily be found.

The welfare of a colony concerns the country from whence it derives its origin, in nothing so much

much as in the quantity of land broke up for tillage, the natural consequence of extending the frontier settlements. This is not only beneficial in proportion to the increase of vent, among the new settlers of commodities exported from the mother country; but by preventing the additional hands from applying themselves to such manufactures as may interfere with the commerce, *effectually hinders* a mischief that might stop the advantages reaped before. A jealousy has long prevailed at home, of manufactures in *America*, and it has been usual for our manufacturers on various occasions to express this opinion in frequent applications to parliament, vainly hoping to force a consumption abroad from the weakest of all resources, *prohibitory laws*: But the wisdom of the legislature has provided the most effectual, if not the only remedy, by encouraging the vent of the growths of *America*, and thereby engaging the inhabitants to employ themselves in raising them; a conduct grounded on the invariable observation, that perfection in agriculture naturally precedes manufactures, wherever a country finds a market for its produce sufficient to provide itself with the latter.

Mr. *Kalm's* narrative of his travels to the *Falls of Niagara*, is a proper supplement to the journey to *Ofwego*, his voyage begins from that place, and carries us on further in the search of every thing worthy our notice in this country: This gentleman is well known to be

a man of worth and great skill in natural history, and his little piece besides the candour and veracity of the writer, derives a great value from its being the only account in our language of this stupendous object. *P. Charlevoix* an Author of good credit, (*where the interest of his nation and religion are unconcerned*) has given us a description perfectly agreeable to *Mr. Kalm's*, tho' much less circumstantial: It was in 1722, *he* was on the spot, and the heights had not then probably been taken by instruments, for he seems to think it very difficult if possible; He guesses the great Fall to be 140 or 150 feet from a measure taken by founding; and adds, that he has seen small birds flutter just above the fall itself; we have likewise an account of this cataract *Phil. Trans.* No. 371. p. 69. from *Mr. Boruffan* transmitted by *Mr. Dudley*. *Mr. Boruffan* relates that the *Governor of Canada's* son the *Marquis de Cavagnal* had founded it, and fixed the perpendicular fall at 26 fathom, this was also in 1722.

I cannot help taking notice of the alarm *Mr. Kalm's* arrival gave the *French* at *Niagara*. They are conscious their enjoyment of this Fort is a manifest violation of the treaty of *Utrecht* tho' they know the justice of the *English Nation* will not permit them to compell the *Seneka's* against their inclination to dislodge them.

Among other curious parts of *Mr. Bartram's* journal are his thoughts (thrown together at the end) on the Origin of the *Aborigines of America*;