

The Failure of Trade's Empire in *The History of Emily Montague*

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The contingencies of applying free trade imperialism to an impoverished Canada in the 1760s force the characters in Frances Brooke's *The History of Emily Montague* to abandon the sentimental colonial project, retreating to England to establish their domestic Utopia. Other critics have read Emily Montague's relation to the colonial project as ambiguous; I agree but relate these ambiguities not to the novel's gender or colonial practices, but to its economic ideology of global laissez-faire capitalism. Brooke's novel tries to narrate a plot of infinite wealth accumulation, but Canada's particular political and economic problems will not abide. The novel ends up laying bare the contradictions at the heart of this emerging liberal economic theory.

abstract



Heaven intended a social intercourse between the most distant nations, by giving them productions of the earth so very different each from the other, and each more than sufficient for itself, that the exchange might be the means of spreading the bond of society and brotherhood over the whole globe.¹

THE “DOCTRINE of universal economy”—the theory that global commerce is the reciprocal exchange of the earth's surplus natural resources—is expressed above by William Fermor, a correspondent in Frances Brooke's 1769 epistolary novel *The History of Emily Montague*.² Fermor, an army officer, is stationed in Quebec after the 1763 Treaty of Paris brought New France under British rule; his daughter, Arabella, is the coquettish witty heroine of the romantic plot that pairs her with dashing Irish army officer Fitzgerald and Ed Rivers, a man of sensibility, with the

¹ Frances Brooke, *The History of Emily Montague*, ed. Mary Jane Edwards (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1985), 223. References are to this edition.

² Douglas A. Irwin traces “the doctrine of universal economy” from the Stoics to classical economics: “The doctrine held that Providence deliberately scattered resources and goods around the world unequally to promote commerce between different regions.” Irwin, *Against the Tide: An Intellectual History of Free Trade* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 15.

sentimental heroine Emily Montague. From the autumn of 1766 until their return to England eighteen months later, the couples find love in Canada, and the novel strings out a complicated extended metaphor, joining the “empire of hearts” to the “empire of the world.” William Fermor’s letters to the “Earl of ——” in England, interspersed within the romantic plot, act as political commentaries on the present state of Canada and echo many ideas circulating in Britain around the territorial expansion consolidated by the Treaty of Paris. As Emma Rothschild notes, the Seven Years War “inspired a new and almost universal discussion of the politics of commerce and conquest.”³ Canada presented particular questions within this context as its acquisition gave rise to a debate between differing justifications of empire: political-military dominance versus the expansion of global trade. Britain preferred to imagine her colonial role as that of benevolent missionary of economic growth, bringing wealth to all, especially in contrast to Spain, that greedy barbarian who indiscriminately kills natives for gold.⁴ The debate between territory and trade was explicitly staged in a 1760s pamphlet war over whether to keep Canada or Guadeloupe in the peace negotiations.⁵ Canada,

³ Emma Rothschild, “Global Commerce and the Question of Sovereignty in the Eighteenth-Century Provinces,” *Modern Intellectual History* 1, no. 1 (2004): 7.

⁴ This attitude permeates eighteenth-century British culture; for example, Daniel Defoe in *Robinson Crusoe* uses Britain’s superior form of democratic imperialism to justify not intervening to kill cannibals as would the blood-thirsty Spanish “in all their barbarities.” Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, intro. John Richetti (London: Penguin, 2003), 136. Another example pertinent to the topic of this article is found in Adam Smith, who describes Spanish colonial practices as “the plundering of the defenceless natives” for their gold. Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, ed. R.H. Campbell and A.S. Skinner (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), 2:561. References are to this edition. For Smith, Spain’s main problem is that it mistakes gold for “real” wealth which can only come from producing commodities, not from specie acquisition. Brooke anticipates this distinction when Rivers remarks of Canada: “This colony is a rich mine yet unopen’d; I do not mean of gold and silver, but of what are of much more real value, corn and cattle” (25).

⁵ Philip Lawson, who has done the most extensive research on the pamphlet war that began in 1760, describes it as consisting of “over sixty pamphlets, apart from numerous newspaper and magazine articles, appearing in the next two and a half years [in which] Canada’s future came under scrutiny. The overwhelming message behind this output was that Quebec should be retained, though with certain guarantees affecting other areas like the Newfoundland fisheries and the West Indies.” Lawson, *The Imperial Challenge: Quebec and Britain in the Age of the American Revolution* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University

a country Voltaire famously referred to as “a few acres of snow” not worth fighting a war over, was represented by those favouring Guadeloupe as commercially unprofitable in comparison to the obvious wealth of the sugar island.⁶ Those favouring the retention of Canada disagreed and first emphasized Canada’s territorial and strategic importance in securing America, freeing the thirteen American colonies from the uncertainty of a hostile nation to the north. These pro-Quebec pamphlets and Brooke’s novel, however, ultimately downplay the territorial imperial rationale and rewrite Canada’s acquisition as a financial—not merely strategic—gain, positing a future in which Canada shares in the economic prosperity of the American colonies.

Though an army officer, Fermor’s imperial claims in *Emily Montague* focus on the commercial potential of the colony’s natural resources through trade, not only to Britain, but also to other colonial nations, a trade that was strictly controlled and taxed through the Navigation Acts. Fermor argues that loosening trade restrictions will eventually benefit the mother country: “Every advantage you give the North Americans in trade centers at last in the mother country; they are the bees, who roam abroad for that honey which enriches the paternal hive” (241). Fermor’s advocacy of relaxed trade barriers does not go as far as Adam Smith’s support will in recommending only commercial, not political, ties with the colonies, but Fermor is an early proponent of free trade, arguing, with regard to Canada, that the current “restraints laid on their trade with the French and Spanish settlements” are harmful and that “taxing them immediately after their

Press, 1989), 9. As Lawson and others make clear, the pamphlet debate was a false one. The actual diplomatic discussions never presented Canada and Guadeloupe as a quid pro quo. As Ged Martin points out, “the retention of Canada was in fact never in doubt for a moment.” Martin, “Imperial Interests and the Peace of Paris,” in *Reappraisals in British Imperial History* by Ronald Hyam and Ged Martin (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1975), 30. See also Jeremy Black, *Trade, Empire, and British Foreign Policy, 1689–1815* (London: Routledge, 2007); Lawson, “‘The Irishman’s Prize’: Views of Canada from the British Press, 1760–1774,” *The Historical Journal* 28, no. 3 (1985): 575–96; and Zenab Esmat Rashed, *The Peace of Paris 1763* (Liverpool: University of Liverpool Press, 1951).

⁶ Voltaire writes: “As you know, the two countries are at war over a few acres of snow across in Canada, and they’re spending more on this war than the whole of Canada is worth.” Voltaire, *Candide and Other Stories*, trans. Roger Pearson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 65.

trade is restrained seems like drying up the source, and expecting the stream to flow" (241, 242). Under the proper economic conditions—that is, under the rule of British liberty with fewer tariffs—the stagnated pond of Quebec, Fermor believes, will unleash rivers of wealth as grand as the St. Lawrence. The novel tests Fermor's economic theory and finds that its Canadian practice complicates such an optimistic picture. In this article, I will demonstrate that the contingencies of applying free-trade imperialism to an impoverished Canada in the 1760s force the novel's characters to abandon the sentimental colonial project, retreating to England to establish their domestic Utopia.⁷ Other critics, such as Jodi Wyatt and Stephen Arch, have read *Emily Montague's* relation to the colonial project as ambiguous; I agree but propose to relate these ambiguities not to the novel's gender or colonial practices, but to its economic ideology of global laissez-faire capitalism.⁸ Brooke's novel tries to narrate a plot of infinite wealth accumulation, but Canada's particular political and economic problems will not abide; and the novel ends up laying bare the contradictions at the heart of this emerging liberal economic theory.

⁷ By "free trade imperialism" I mean an ideology that promotes the reduction of export tariffs and state intervention in global trade while simultaneously being involved in a hegemonic national project imagined as democratic. *Emily Montague* positions Brooke within this ideology; as such, her novel circulates many ideas that would later congeal into what Giovanni Arrighi defines by the term "free-trade imperialism": "Free-trade imperialism ... established the principle that the laws operating within and between states were subject to ... a world market ruled by its own 'laws,'" and, Arrighi notes, the British were particularly adept at restructuring the world in these terms by claiming "with credibility that the expansion of UK power served not just UK national interest but a 'universal' interest as well. Central to this hegemonic claim was a distinction between the power of rulers and the 'wealth of nations' subtly drawn in the liberal ideology propagated by the British intelligentsia." Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth Century: Money, Power, and the Origins of Our Times* (New York: Verso, 2010), 56–57.

⁸ Jodi L. Wyatt points out that "while often articulating colonial discourse and the colonial endeavour, *Emily Montague* also marks a somewhat equivocal acceptance of English imperial ideals, a struggle over contested meanings." Wyatt, "No place where women are of such importance: Female Friendship, Empire, and Utopia in *The History of Emily Montague*," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 16, no. 1 (2003): 56. Stephen Carl Arch writes that "Brooke implies that her hopes for the Canadian future are positive ... Yet, as other commentators have noted, the plot is resolved in defiance of this optimistic future. All of the novel's characters ... leave Canada at the end of the novel, never to return." Arch, "Frances Brooke's 'Circle of Friends': The Limits of Epistolarity in *The History of Emily Montague*," *Early American Literature* 39, no. 3 (2004): 469–70.

Fermor's optimism that a Quebec with a British constitution would flourish commercially is countered by the historical reality that presented James Murray, the initial governor of Canada, with a political and economic mess. As Peter Marshall explains, Britain's acquisition of a country with a subsistence economy and a non-British population meant that Canada after 1763 "supplied problems, not profits."⁹ The Proclamation of 1763 promised English common law and a legislature to the new colonies, but enforcing such law and excluding Roman Catholics (that is, de facto, everyone residing in Quebec) from holding public office proved impossible, and the province remained with no functioning civil government until the Quebec Act of 1774. Frances Brooke joined her husband, an army chaplain, in Quebec on the eve of the Proclamation in October 1763 and returned to England sometime before 1768.¹⁰ The Brookes were strong critics of Governor Murray's toleration of the Catholic French, accusing him of not doing enough to encourage their assimilation to British customs. *Emily Montague* clearly proposes Anglicization and Anglicanization as the way to commercial success. In so doing, Brooke fits with David Milobar's claim in "The Origins of British-Quebec Merchant Ideology" that most Britons "believed that the lack of liberty in New France was manifest in the colony's [limited] economic life ... [and] that under British rule commercial liberty would unleash the

⁹ Peter Marshall, "British North America, 1760–1815," in *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Volume II: The Eighteenth Century*, ed. P.J. Marshall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 376. Marshall points out that 95 per cent of Canadians from 1760–1800 were living in the countryside, not in towns, and "engaged in subsistence rather than market activities" (386). The population of Quebec in 1763 was 70,000 French Canadians. By 1766, the English accounted for 1.6 per cent of the total population or approximately 500 people. See Fernand Ouellet, *Economic and Social History of Québec, 1760–1850*, trans. under the auspices of the Institute of Canadian Studies (Toronto: Gage; Ottawa: Institute of Canadian Studies at Carleton University, 1980), esp. 145–51.

¹⁰ For biographical information about Brooke's time in Quebec see Mary Jane Edwards, "Editor's Introduction," *The History of Emily Montague*, xvii–lxxi; Edwards, "The History of Emily Montague: A Political Novel," in *The Canadian Novel: Volume II: Beginnings: A Critical Anthology*, ed. John Moss (Toronto: New Canada Publications, 1980), 19–27; Edwards, "Frances Brooke's *The History of Emily Montague*: A Biographical Context," *English Studies in Canada* 7, no. 2 (1981): 171–81; and Lorraine McMullen, *An Odd Attempt in a Woman: The Literary Life of Frances Brooke* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1983).

colony's potential as a supplier of agricultural, fishery and naval staples and a consumer of English manufacturers."¹¹ Increased revenues for both colonized and colonizer would be the outcome of colonial expansion. Brooke represents Fermor as embodying a naive optimism when he declares that the British since 1763 have already doubled Canadian wealth and that the peasants "have been great gainers here by the change of masters; their property is more secure, their independence greater, their profits much more than doubled" (250).¹²

On one level, it is hard to disagree with Robert Merrett's argument that *Emily Montague* presents "propaganda" in order to justify imperial commercial rule.¹³ The novel's declarative statements about Canada, especially William Fermor's letters, prove Merrett's point. But, I argue, the novel contains the opposite on another level, that of its romantic plot: the story of the hero Ed Rivers's failure to make his fortune and marry Emily Montague in the colony charts the *aporia* of free trade imperial capitalism. While Rivers intends to clear land and turn gentleman farmer, he never stakes a claim. To do so would require the novel to confront the underlying preconditions of the empire of free trade: the need for a strong central state power, including a substantial military economy to circulate capital through national debt; and primitive accumulation or the necessity of a pool of exploitable waged labour, previously dispossessed of land and capital. *The History of Emily Montague* represents the inequality at the heart of a doctrine premised on a "brotherhood over the whole globe." Below I chart the optimistic theory of Brooke's "empire of the world" before turning to the way the "empire of the heart," and the gendering that Brooke's sentimental politics presumes, cracks open the central problems with a reciprocal-gain liberal economic theory.

¹¹ David Milobar, "The Origins of British-Quebec Merchant Ideology: New France, the British Atlantic and the Constitutional Periphery, 1720-70," *Journal of Imperial & Commonwealth History* 24, no. 3 (1996): 372-73.

¹² See Ouellet, esp. chaps. 2 and 3, for an overview of Quebec's post-1763 economic condition, which included the rise in bankruptcy and inflation rates, and the financial instability caused by speculation over the currency change.

¹³ Robert Merrett, "The Politics of Romance in *The History of Emily Montague*," *Canadian Literature* 133 (Summer 1992): 93. Dermot McCarthy also argues that "she was obviously and thoroughly a colonizer." McCarthy, "Sisters Under the Mink: The Correspondent Fear in *The History of Emily Montague*," *Essays on Canadian Writing* 51 & 52 (1993-94): 343.



Brooke was aware of the pamphlet debates on the value of Canada versus Guadeloupe, citing them in her first novel, *The History of Lady Julia Mandeville* (1763). Lord Belmont's aunt asks her nephew if it is really true, as some say in the pamphlets, that Canada was not worth fighting the war over, and Lord Belmont responds: "Canada, considered merely as the possession of it gives security to our colonies, is of more national consequence to us than all the sugar islands on the globe: but if the present inhabitants are encouraged to stay by ... that full liberty of conscience to which every rational creature has a right; ... if population is encouraged; the waste lands settled ... we shall find it, considered in every light, an acquisition beyond our most sanguine hopes."¹⁴ Lord Belmont's projection of economic growth and the shift from military security to commercial expansion dominates the pamphlet arguments as well. In response to *Reasons for Keeping Guadeloupe at a Peace*, which argued that "the acquisition of Canada would be destructive" because it would cost Britain more than it is worth, the writer of *A Detection of the False Reasons and Facts, Contained in ... Reasons for Keeping Guadeloupe* (1761) cautions against such emphasis on short-term gain.¹⁵ The original tract asked: "pray what can Canada yield to Britain ... but a little extension of the fur trade? Whereas Guadeloupe can furnish as much sugar, cotton, rum, and coffee, as all the islands we have put together."¹⁶ The answer provided in the response is clear: "The Trade is not confin'd to a few Hats, nor to the Material of which they are made ... And whoever has a Capacity to peruse the Natural History of those distant Climates and Variety of Soils, will be informed that, Nature has reserved immense Treasure upon that Continent."¹⁷ Like Lord Belmont's enthusiastic exaggeration (that Canada will eventually be "an acquisition beyond our most sanguine hopes"), the anonymous

¹⁴ Frances Brooke, *The History of Lady Julia Mandeville* (London: 1763), 2:47–49.

¹⁵ *Reasons for Keeping Guadeloupe at a Peace, Preferable to Canada Explained in Five Letters from a Gentleman in Guadeloupe to His Friend in London* (London: 1761), 6.

¹⁶ *Reasons for Keeping Guadeloupe*, 7.

¹⁷ *A Detection of the False Reasons and Facts, Contained in the Five Letters Entitled, Reasons for Keeping Guadeloupe at a Peace, Preferable to Canada by a Member of Parliament* (London: 1761), 24.

pamphlet writer also dreams of superlative wealth, promising that the “Riches gradually received by England” from Canada will be “beyond all Conception.”¹⁸ Historian Philip Lawson notes that such optimistic economic speculation dominates British newspaper coverage of Quebec in the 1760s and 70s, with little attention paid in the press to Quebec’s continuing constitutional and economic problems. Lawson cites *The Public Advertiser* as an example of the decade’s “economic propaganda” around Quebec: “‘I make not the least doubt,’ concluded one piece, ‘but this will, in a few years, be a flourishing colony.’ This confidence about Canada’s economic future [was] ... born out of a simple superior view of British commercial expertise.”¹⁹

There are at least three points to garner from the hyperbole concerning Canada’s economic value: first, it was always a future projection. While Lawson notes that the papers reported some shipping news and mining reports, the optimism mostly came with little concrete accounting or material facts. Second, Canada’s British future was always placed beside a French past, and its lack of previous economic success was explained away by the corruption of the French seigneurial system. Third, the projected wealth of Canada was entirely based on tapping its untapped natural resources. Writers such as Benjamin Franklin saw a future in “hemp, flax, potash, and above all, silk.”²⁰ Franklin argued, incorrectly, that the expansion of British North America into Canada would halt the drive for independence since infinite land to be cultivated will keep colonialists dedicated to natural resource-based industries and away from manufacturing. The emphasis on raw material production and agriculture underwrites the doctrine of universal economy and free trade imperialism. The wealth generated by Canada’s resources does not entail a comparable net loss to another nation since the “more” of economic growth would be naturally produced through the cultivation of new land. Both Canadians (understood as the French settlers) and the mother country would benefit from such a net increase.²¹

¹⁸ *Detection of the False Reasons*, 23.

¹⁹ Lawson, 27–28.

²⁰ Benjamin Franklin, *The Interest of Great Britain Considered with Regard to Her Colonies and the Acquisitions of Canada and Guadaloupe* (Boston: 1760), 30.

²¹ I use “Canadians” throughout this essay as Brooke does, to denote French settlers in Quebec.

The plot generated by this vision of Canada's trading future opens *Emily Montague* as Rivers arrives in a country that he initially represents as *terra nullius*.²² Canada is in "the rudest state of nature," Rivers comments, and by "cultivating" the land he imagines his future as both godlike ("tast[ing] one of the greatest of all pleasures, that of creation") and kinglike (becoming "lord of a principality") (3–4). In a rather ironic deployment of the *terra nullius* image for a country recently won in war, Rivers philosophizes: "It is impossible to behold a scene like this without lamenting the madness of mankind, who ... destroy millions of their own species in the wild contention for a little portion of that earth, the far greater part of which remains yet unpossessed" (6). Arabella, who shares the novel's central voice with Rivers (both write 77 of the novel's total 228 letters), philosophizes herself on the natural history of Canada.²³ Referencing the pamphlet debates, Arabella comments that "our political writers in England never speak of Canada without the epithet of *barren*," yet her experience proves otherwise: Canada is a land of "extreme fertility" where crops grow with minimal cultivation due to the "naturally rich ... soil"; since the British took over, "they have even so far improved in corn, as to export some this year to Italy and Spain" (63).²⁴ From *terra nullius* to export trade in a few short British years, Rivers and Arabella base Canada's economic growth on agricultural commodities; Arabella and Fermor, on separate occasions, echo Franklin on the potential profitability of cultivating hemp (62, 251). The concrete use-value of hemp and corn easily fits into a "universal economy" theory of global commerce seen as the reciprocal exchange of basic needs or, to use

²² Laura Moss notes Rivers's initial description of Canada as empty and reads it as ironic on Brooke's part: "Although Brooke herself is aware of Canada as a complex 'host' society, she allows Rivers an initial conception of the so-called new world as *terra nullius*, or an expansive and empty land." Moss, "Colonialism and Postcolonialism in *The History of Emily Montague*," in *The History of Emily Montague: A Critical Edition*, ed. Laura Moss (Ottawa: Tecumseh Press, 2001), 455.

²³ Robin Howells provides the statistics on letter writers in "Dialogism in Canada's First Novel: *The History of Emily Montague*," *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature* 20, nos. 3–4 (1993): 442.

²⁴ Arabella's claim has some empirical accuracy. Ouellet notes that the British did improve agricultural practices and that in the years 1763–64 and 1767–68 Quebec managed to produce surplus wheat for export; however, bad crops caused near starvation conditions in the intervening years, 85–86.

Marx's formula of such exchange, "C-M-C" where money (M) is used only as a means of transferring value between commodities (C). Nicholas Barbon's *Discourse on Trade* (1690) presents an early vision of global free trade based upon the use-value of a nation's "staple commodities"; because such staples are "perpetual, and never to be consumed," he writes, and because each country has its own staple, wealth will come by trading England's wool for Spain's fruit, France's wine, and Holland's herrings.²⁵ Rivers and Arabella similarly imagine Canada's natural resources as infinite, merely needing to be harnessed and traded to produce profit.

But global capitalism in the eighteenth century functions quite differently, especially in Britain since, as Giorgio Arrighi has shown, it dominated the cycle of accumulation beginning in the period.²⁶ Capitalism is not based upon "C-M-C" but upon "M-C-M" exchanges, that is, on using money in the form of capital to buy and sell a commodity in order to make more money ("M"). There is a difference in value between C-M-C and M-C-M exchanges: the first produces an exchange of equivalence between commodities (my wool for your wine) whereas the second produces more money (one shilling invested becomes two shillings). The logic of this second exchange, the exchange that defines capitalism, is one of infinite accumulation, requiring constant economic growth. But where does this added value come from? How does one structurally produce an infinite "more"? Arrighi describes how the drive of infinite accumulation leads to global expansion and "propelled European states towards the territorial conquest of the world."²⁷ The difference between

²⁵ Nicholas Barbon, *A Discourse of Trade* (London: 1690), 5, 4.

²⁶ In *The Long Twentieth Century*, Arrighi argues that capitalism inevitably follows a pattern where moments of a concentration on commodity production (for instance, the industrial revolution) are followed by a concentration on finance capital where capital seeks out the most efficient mode of accumulating wealth (that is, money "breeding" money) which is then followed by a collapse in money's value (for example, the 1929 and 2008 stock market crashes) and a return to commodity production. Using Ferdinand Braudel's historical research, he observes four "systemic cycles of accumulation": a Genoese cycle (fifteenth to early seventeenth century); a Dutch cycle (late sixteenth to eighteenth century); a British cycle (mid-eighteenth to early twentieth century); and finally, a U.S. cycle (late nineteenth to its current crisis phase of financial expansion) (6).

²⁷ Arrighi, 12. At the same time, Arrighi makes an important distinction between a "capitalist" and "territorialist" imperialism, though both work to increase territory: "Territorialist rulers identify power with the extent and

C-M-C and M-C-M' exchanges is readable in *Robinson Crusoe*: Crusoe's wealth does not ultimately come from his useful labour and the seed of corn he plants on his island as the text's ideology of *homo economicus* would have us believe. On the contrary, his riches derive from the surplus value that his South American plantations accrue in his absence or, more precisely, through the reinvestment of that surplus value, acquired through slave labour, back into the plantation as capital or by making money off of money, not by selling corn for bread. Do we see a similar slippage in *Emily Montague*? Does the novel's celebration of use-value and reciprocal commodity exchange mystify an underlying plot of infinite accumulation through finance capitalism and the exploitation of labour? I suggest that the novel at first resists such mystification and, in fact, points out the difficulties in translating an ideology of British free trade imperialism into a narrative of infinite economic growth and net gain in Quebec. The added value could not accrue without having to narrate M', that is, the historical contestations over private property, labour, and the state that are required to produce surplus value and thus to turn money into capital. What this allows us to see is a gap between the acquisitive desire of capitalism and the sentimental desire of liberal colonial relations. Brooke firmly believes in the latter—she and her husband thought British liberty would improve the lives of Canadians—but she eschewed the former as evil avarice. However, her kinder, gentler version of commercial imperialism does not remain intact in Canada, and her characters are forced to retreat to the mother country. While Canada stymies the “brotherhood over the whole globe,” the novel's turn to the East for its final closure, with Emily's nabob father bestowing the newly married Rivers with imperial wealth, demonstrates that Brooke's initial resistance to the logic of capitalist accumulation cannot be sustained if virtue is to be rewarded with wealth. In the end, the novel begrudgingly acknowledges that the free trade narrative of economic growth requires empire.

populousness of their domains, and conceive of wealth/capital as a means or a by-product of the pursuit of territorial expansion. Capitalist rulers, in contrast, identify power with the extent of their command over scarce resources and consider territorial acquisitions as a means and a by-product of the accumulation of capital” (34). This differentiation is also how Britain distinguished its capitalist rule from the territorialist Spanish.



The complications of Quebec's military economics appear early in the novel. Rivers's Edenic description of Canada is always already accompanied by the contradictory image of the land as contested territory: "I have seen then the spot where the amiable hero expir'd in the arms of victory," Rivers writes in one of his first letters (5). The reference to General Wolfe and the 1759 battle on the Plains of Abraham reminds the reader that this is no empty land. Rivers's very presence in the country stems from his participation in the war. As an army officer who fought in America, he is entitled to a land grant of 5,000 acres, and, since his income in England is small, he hopes to exchange his military service for a profitable estate in Canada. Peter Marshall describes the acquisitive thirst of ex-officers as a land grab: "Encouraged by the promise in the Proclamation of 1763 of land grants to officers and men who had served in North America, speculators rushed in 1764 to lay claim to estates of up to 20,000 acres. Greed completely outstripped capacity to benefit."²⁸ All the members of Rivers's social circle are associated with the military: Captain Fermor and thus Arabella, Captain Fitzgerald, and even the sentimental heroine Emily who is only in the country because her uncle, an army officer, was posted to North America. She remains after her uncle's death as a guest at Major Melmoth's where she meets Rivers through his military connections to the Major's regiment. The number of British soldiers in Quebec, as this circle of military men suggests, constituted a substantial proportion of the small Anglophone community.²⁹ Marshall argues that government expenditure on the military was a primary industry and that "the significance of the military presence, which in the decade after 1763 accounted for over half the garrison in North America, was less political than commercial."³⁰ The merchants provisioning the military and the

²⁸ Marshall, 376. *Emily Montague* rewrites this land grab as occurring 150 years earlier and blames it on the French. Arabella describes the lords of the seigneurial system as the original soldiers who settled Quebec and because "avarice is natural to mankind, the soldiers took a great deal more than they could cultivate, by way of providing for a family: which is the reason so much land is now waste in the finest part of the province" (61).

²⁹ See n9 above.

³⁰ Marshall, 376. Patrick Crowhurst also documents the importance of the military to Canada's economic structure and argues that the war "brought considerable prosperity. Most of this was in the form of Treasury bills for

soldiers spending their pay in Quebec were central components of the country's post-war economy.

Proponents of the empire of free trade, like Brooke is initially, posit a world where commercial exchange breeds civility, fosters social bonds, and where the "brotherhood over the whole globe" renders armed conflict obsolete. This may seem naive to a twenty-first-century reader, with the knowledge of 250 years of global capitalism's violence, but I want to stress the initial Utopian impetus of a particular moment in economic thinking. Brooke's vision of global peace through free trade anticipates Smith's in *Wealth of Nations* (1776, see n4). He notes the problem of armed conflict but sees it as extraneous: "The discovery of America, and that of a passage to the East Indies by the Cape of Good Hope are the two greatest and most important events recorded in the history of mankind ... By uniting in some measure the most distant parts of the world, by enabling them to relieve one another's wants ... their general tendency would seem to be beneficial" (2:626). He notes the decimation of native populations by Europeans but argues this is an "accident" of history: "At the particular time when these discoveries were made, the superiority of force happened to be so great on the side of the Europeans, that they were enabled to commit with impunity every sort of injustice in those remote countries" (2:626). In the future, a balance will be reached since "nothing seems more likely to establish this equality of force, than that mutual communication of knowledge, and of all sorts of improvements, which an extensive commerce from all countries to all countries naturally, or rather necessarily, carries along with it" (2:626).³¹ The Smith passage is worth quoting at length because it contains three central arguments of free trade imperialism also found in *Emily Montague*: (1) its foundation in a doctrine of universal economy (global trade "relieve[s] one another's wants"); (2) its liberal collapse of social and economic commerce ("all sorts of

provisions and in some cases wages paid to the British forces while they were in North America." Crowhurst, *The Defence of British Trade: 1689–1815* (Folkestone: Dawson & Sons, 1977), 128–29.

³¹ Demonstrating the centrality of colonial expansion to the capitalist project, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels repeat the first sentence of this passage almost word for word: "The discovery of America, the rounding of the Cape, opened up fresh ground for the rising bourgeoisie." Marx, *The Communist Manifesto* (London: Pluto Press, 2008), 34.

improvements” “naturally” derive from inter-state commerce); and (3) its assumption that state-supported armies are not necessary to capitalist trade (that trade will eventually produce an “equality of force”) (2:626). Like Smith, Brooke suggests that the British military presence in Canada is an “accident” and commerce will soon replace the army officers with merchants. In *Emily Montague* it is not the British but the Natives and French who are warring people (for the Natives, “war ... [is] the business of their lives”; the French “love war” [11, 140]). The French, Fermor argues, “seem to have had an eye only to ... conquest ... their whole system of policy seems to have been military, not commercial”; in contrast, the British encourage trade and if the Canadians learn by “the gradual progress of knowledge, to adopt so much of our manners as tends to make them ... more useful members of ... society ... they [will] acquire ... that spirit of industry, enterprize, and commerce, to which we owe all our greatness” (140, 221–22). Yet there are no merchants in *Emily Montague*, and none of the officers successfully shifts from a military to an enterprising or industrious income in Canada.

The largest barrier to developing a thriving commodity-based economy in *Emily Montague* is not represented as the presence of the military but as the absence of labour. Who will plough the fields, sow the seeds, and harvest the corn? Where is the “industry” that will turn empty land into surplus value? Where is Canada’s Friday?³² The novel stumbles over this question, and it will eventually fall when the dissonance behind the sentimental brotherhood of commerce can no longer be ignored. *Emily Montague* begins by matching Rivers’s fantasies of labouring to turn empty land into useful trading goods with negative stereotypes about the laziness of both the Native and Canadian populations in order to explain Canada’s lack of economic success to date. A Native man, according to Rivers, “amuses himself with hunting, shooting, fishing” and is “idle beyond any thing we can conceive” (11). Rivers’s inability to accept that a nomadic hunter-gatherer economy counts as industrious originates in

³² Friday does make an appearance in the novel. Arabella describes a group of Canadians in winter all wrapped in furs: “They have intire coats of beaver skin, exactly like Friday’s in *Robinson Crusoe*” (104). The “exactly like” masks the rather large difference between a coat made of beaver fur and one produced from goat; at the same time, both turn New World natural resources into commodities for use.

its subsistence nature. Natives labour “when urg’d by the sharp tooth of necessity,” but after that they are indolent except for the pleasure they take in war (11). Without surplus value and with a warrior culture, the Native economy and society is primitive. Brooke’s representation places Huron culture, as Smith does, in the first stage of economic and social development. Smith observes: “Among nations of hunters, the lowest and rudest state of society, such as we find it among the native tribes of North America, every man is a warrior as well as a hunter” (2:689–90). In comparison, the social achievements of the British place them in the most advanced stage, that of commerce, since they have turned the individual’s attention away from war and subsistence and towards the harmony of civilization.

The French settlers are similarly lazy. Rivers, Arabella, and Fermor all repeatedly decry the Canadians’ “excessive indolence” (140). Rivers pulls no punches: “The peasants are ignorant, lazy, dirty, and stupid beyond all belief” (18). Fermor blames the poverty of the country on the Canadians’ refusal to work: “poverty is ever the inseparable companion of indolence” and since, “with a soil fruitful beyond all belief, the Canadians are poor,” their poverty is due to laziness (208). Arabella concurs, pinpointing lax agricultural practices as indicative of the problem: “they are so indolent as never to manure their lands,” they plough “in the slightest manner,” and “the lazy creatures leave the greatest part of their land uncultivated, only sowing as much corn of different sorts as will serve themselves” (62, 61). As with the Natives, indolence is here defined by the absence of surplus value, by the settlers being content with a subsistence economy. Significantly, it is also defined as being “too idle to work for hire” (61). By equating indolence with the lack of surplus value and the lack of surplus value with a primitive society that rejects waged labour, the novel poses the problem of Canada as twofold: as social, deriving from an individualistic warrior culture with no civilizing commerce with the world; and as economic, lacking sufficient acquisitive desire or industry to provide the means for that commerce. Where and how will the motivation to acquire more emerge? For Brooke and her sentimental theory of the “brotherhood over the whole globe” it cannot come from individual avarice or from the thirst for conquest. It must derive naturally from the enlightened desire of humans to be social and thus industrious. This is clear in the epigraph above: the earth produces commodities to trade because “heaven intended a social intercourse between the most distant

nations” (223). Sociability as human necessity is a repeated motif in the novel: “an unconnected human being is the most wretched of all creatures,” Rivers writes, and elsewhere he yearns for “that social love to which we owe all our happiness” (178, 77).

Since surplus value is to emerge from our natural need for commerce with human beings, the story of the “empire of hearts” in *Emily Montague* is not extraneous to the story of turning a profit in Canada. The “unconnected human beings” that Rivers refers to above are those that are not married, and the novel posits marriage as the foundation of the social. Rivers’s circumstances merge the two empires: he writes to Emily that she “know[s] my fortune will not allow me to marry [her] in England,” and thus, marriage in Canada where his land grant can breed wealth is his only hope for a social, reproductive union with Emily (225). But this Canadian marriage never occurs, and in the next section of this article, I pursue the intertwining empires in order to explain why Brooke cannot make the sentimental logic of free trade imperialism work.



The relationship between the two empires is initially seen as one of separation. Arabella describes their constitutive gendered difference when, with reference to the ongoing political battles between English merchants and Governor Murray, she pronounces that politics is not in her realm: “They are squabbling at Quebec, I hear, about I cannot tell what ... For my part, I think no politics worth attending to but those of the little commonwealth of woman: if I can maintain my empire over hearts, I leave the men to quarrel for every thing else” (98). As Jane Sellwood notes, “the ‘empire of hearts’ Arabella posits lies outside the ideologies of male political and military structures,” and, I would add, outside economic structures.³³ This sexual division of empire works nicely within the romantic plot, providing the basis for the domestic economy that Arabella envisions when the two couples settle at Lake Champlain; she and Emily will form the rocks and woods into “the most beautiful arbors, vistles, grottoes, ... [teach] the streams to flow in the most pleasing meanders ... In short, we should have been continually endeavoring ... to

³³ Jane Sellwood, “‘A Little Acid Is Absolutely Necessary’: Narrative as Coquette in Frances Brooke’s *The History of Emily Montague*,” *Canadian Literature* 136 (Spring 1993): 64.

render more charming the sweet abodes of love and friendship; whilst our heroes, changing their swords into ploughshares, and engaged in more substantial, more profitable labors, were clearing land, raising cattle and corn, and doing every thing becoming good farmers" (269). Arabella's domestic fantasy reproduces a conservative separate spheres ideology—women rule the "empire of sentiment," and men rule the "empire of the world," but the politics governing the female empire, as many critics point out, are determinably feminist.³⁴ Brooke's novel forcefully defends women's freedom of choice in marriage, and the biggest proponent of female liberty is, significantly, a man. Rivers declares: "Equality is the soul of friendship: marriage, to give delight, must join two minds, not devote a slave to the will of an imperious lord ... I have always wished the word OBEY expunged from the marriage ceremony" (205). As long as the two empires are kept separate, the radical call for equality, liberty, and democratic choice within the "empire of hearts" will not affect the territorial empire. But Brooke not only cannot keep them separate, she does not want to. Her imperial project is precisely to govern both empires by the same sentimental principles of equality, sensibility, and civility, and, for this reason, Rivers plays the hero in both narratives. Critical debate around the novel posits a divide between Brooke's feminist and colonial politics, but, like Jodi Wyett, I see the two working together.³⁵ Complementing Wyett, I am not interested,

³⁴ For more on the essay's feminist politics, see Barbara Benedict, "The Margins of Sentiment: Nature, Letter, and Law in Frances Brooke's Epistolary Novels," *ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature* 23, no. 3 (1992): 7–25; Ann Edwards Boutelle, "Frances Brooke's *Emily Montague* (1769): Canada and Woman's Rights," *Women's Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 12, no. 1 (1986): 7–16; Pilar Cuder-Dominguez, "Negotiations of Gender and Nationhood in Early Canadian Literature," *International Journal of Canadian Studies/Revue Internationale d'Études Canadiennes* 18 (Fall 1998): 115–31; Ann Messenger, "Arabella Fermor, 1714 and 1769: Alexander Pope and Frances Moore Brooke," in *His and Hers: Essays in Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Literature* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1986), 148–71; Katharine M. Rogers, "Sensibility and Feminism: The Novels of Frances Brooke," *Genre* 11, no. 2 (1978): 159–71; and Sellwood.

³⁵ Wyett notes that "critical response to *Emily Montague* over the past twenty-five years, largely either feminist or postcolonialist, has often provoked heated debate between the two camps" (34). On the feminist politically transgressive side, Wyett places Rogers, Boutelle, Benedict, Sellwood, Messenger, and McMullen; those she names as critiquing Brooke's colonial politics are Merrett, McCarthy, William H. New, "Frances Brooke's Chequered Gardens," *Canadian Literature* 52 (Spring 1972): 24–38, and Linda Shohet, "An Essay on *The History of Emily Montague*," in *The Canadian Novel: Volume II: Beginnings: A Critical Anthology*, 28–34.

as she is, in how “certain imperial ideals may provide a means to feminist ends”; rather, I want to pursue how her feminist sentimental ideals underwrite her imperial and economic ones.³⁶

The collapse of the two empires into overlapping territories is caused by the sentimental gendering of free trade imperialism. While Arabella can disavow interest in the masculine empire of the world and remain within the borders of the feminine empire of hearts, the opposite is not imaginable. Brooke’s ideal of free trade colonial government is that it functions like companionate marriage. Cecily Devereux makes this point when she notes that the “narrative develops on the basis of the argument that this valuable colony could only be held by allur[ing] the population to a ‘love for’ British rule. This is a novel, that is, whose primary objective appears to be an insistence that the only desirable unions are marriages of choice.”³⁷ Rivers claims that “of all the situations this world affords, a marriage of choice gives the fairest prospect of happiness,” and his statement applies to both empires (178). To a large extent, the imperial choice, like Arabella’s decision to marry Fitzgerald regardless of her father’s consent, is a false one. Fermor’s disclosure to the earl that he is fully aware of Arabella’s preference for Fitzgerald but wonders if “it would not be good policy to seem to dislike the match, in order to secure her consent,” suggests the patriarch is always firmly in control (161). A similar logic occurs in the marriage of empire. Fermor does not believe in forcing the Canadians to change their religion; it is “just, humane, and wise” to enshrine freedom of religion; “it would be unjust to deprive them of any of the rights of citizens” (209, 210). However, he also believes that “by the gentle arts of persuasion” the settlers will freely determine to favour the enlightened world of British liberty, and they will be “gently led by reason to” Anglicanism (221, 209). That the choice is ultimately compelled does not negate the fact that Brooke thought sentimental marriage could function as a model for colonial relations. Like Arabella’s and her father’s

³⁶ Wyatt, 35.

³⁷ Cecily Devereux, “‘One firm body’: ‘Britishness and Otherness’ in *The History of Emily Montague*,” in *The History of Emily Montague: A Critical Edition*, 470. Pilar Cuder-Dominguez reads the collapse of romantic and imperial unions as follows: “A woman’s struggle to choose and control her fate (often in the shape of a husband) awakens associations with a people’s right to self-determination. Hence the discourse of gender becomes enmeshed with the discourse of nation” (117).

marital preferences, the novel optimistically presents the hope that liberal freedoms, including the freedom to trade, and British superiority could seamlessly meld together. For the sentimental marriage between the territories of England and Quebec to take place, however, the wilds of Canada must be tamed, and this poses a problem. Both the harsh landscape and rude savages require civilizing in order to participate in enlightened liberal trade, and, within the novel's sentimental logic, this means the country and the people need to become more feminine. "You are right, Jack, as to the savages," Rivers writes, "the only way to civilize them is to feminize their women" (118–19). Here, in an inversion of Edward Said's gendering of colonial relations vis-à-vis the Orient, Britain is feminine and Canada masculine.³⁸ Native women are "coarse and masculine," and Canadian women lack the charm of "sensibility" (12, 13). If Canada needs the civilizing love of a woman, the problem becomes how to reciprocate this love as a man of sensibility. Masculine Canadian women, like the independent estate-owning widow Mme des Roches, make profitable settlers; but feminine Canadian men do not.

Rivers qualifies as the hero of the novel's Enlightenment project to bring British liberty to Canada because he has an "almost female sensibility" (277). His sentimental feminine qualities also determine his heroic status within the romantic plot; he is Emily's lover because: "I love her with a tenderness of which few of my sex are capable: ... my heart has all the sensibility of woman" (132–33).³⁹ This feminine sensibility means Rivers is not interested in mercenary gain, but in quiet retirement and "the pleasure of cultivating lands" (24). Temple describes Rivers as "excellent ... for colonization" because he is "a man of fashion: spirit, generosity, a good understanding, some knowledge, an easy address, a compassionate heart" (7). Rivers, as hero, comes close to merging the romantic and imperial plots in the climactic moments around his declaration of love to Emily. The reader learns of their engagement when Arabella writes of it to Lucy, informing her that Rivers has gone to Lake Champlain

³⁸ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 138.

³⁹ Alternatively, Sir George's utter lack of the ability to feel disqualifies him from being Emily's husband. Rivers compares him to Prometheus's man of clay, perfect in form but with no animating spirit and later notes that "his feelings are dull" (40, 51). Arabella describes him as having "no taste for social companionable life" (117).

“to fix on his seat of empire, or rather Emily’s; for I see she will be the reigning queen, and he only her majesty’s consort” (239). For a brief moment, the two empires are one and the same and emotionally align Emily’s love with his relation to the land: “the remotest wood in Canada with her,” Rivers exclaims, “would be no longer a desert wild; it would be the habitation of the Graces” (139). But the tenderness and feeling that render Rivers an ideal settler on the one hand, render him unfit for hard labour on the other. Linking the British man of feeling to the concern over territorial expansion that is depopulating Britain, William Fermor pronounces “the English ... the worst settlers on new lands in the universe;” they are “though industrious, active, and enterprising, ill fitted to bear the hardships, and submit to the wants, which inevitably attend an infant settlement even on the most fruitful lands” (220). As the British have advanced to the final stage of human society, men like Rivers have become too cultivated, too civilized, too feminine, to perform manual labour, and thus Canada will not be colonized by men like him or through mass immigration from the mother country.⁴⁰ Rather, Fermor celebrates “this large acquisition of people [which] is an invaluable treasure” (221). They are already in the “infant” stage, and therefore this newly-acquired Canadian population provides the solution to the problem of labour. The temporal contradiction, however, cracks open an unresolvable tension: the commercial project requires a population in primitive stages of economic development while the sentimental social project raises them up to be feminized and civilized and thereby makes them “ill fitted” for colonization. If Rivers is ill fitted for Canada, the success of the empire of free trade depends on keeping the Canadians ill fitted for sociability.

The problem of labour—that is, the problem of forcing French peasants to produce surplus value for Britain—finally breaks the “brotherhood over the whole globe.” When Brooke can no longer make the two missions of social and commercial empire cohere, when profit cannot be turned without barbarian and masculinized labour, she does not gloss over the problem in the way that *Robinson*

⁴⁰ Benjamin Franklin provides the most detailed rebuttal to the argument that Canada will drain the mother country of its citizens, citing demographic statistics and performing calculations to demonstrate that the current settler population will grow at a high enough rate to achieve the desired economic growth (esp. 47–50).

Crusoe does, but sends her central characters back to England. The reason provided is importantly a sentimental one: the news arrives that Rivers's mother is dying of heartbreak without her son, and he dutifully returns. The letter comes while Rivers is at Lake Champlain, having discovered the perfect land to settle: "The land is rich, and the wood will more than pay the expence of clearing it" (260). Importantly, he does not have to confront the problem of paying wages to clear the land since Emily, hearing the news concerning Rivers's mother before he does, has already left the country and so he is saved from the impossible choice between marriage to Emily on rich Canadian soil or his mother's life in his native land.

Evidence that the return to England marks the failure of free trade imperialism appears immediately after the characters jump ship when they start to decry the masculine "rage of accumulation" with a force and repetitiveness new to the novel (347). I agree with Stephen Arch that at this point the novel "rejects the colonial enterprise," and nowhere is this rejection as clear as in the vehemence with which "the love of gain" becomes equated with colonial expansion (309).⁴¹ While *Emily Montague* contains countless apostrophes against avarice throughout, these declamations speed up after the return to England and are more likely than not to include colonial references: "I would not give up this delight, to be empress of the world"; "if I have your heart, I am richer than an oriental monarch"; "were the empire of the world or your affection offered me, I should not hesitate one moment on the choice"; "I know no pleasure equal to your friendship; nor would I give it up for the revenue of an eastern monarch"; "there [is not] a nabobess on earth half as happy as [I]" (295, 330, 332, 345, 348). The now obvious opposition of the sentimental empire with the commercial one leads to Arabella's tirade against colonial avarice, written after viewing Bellfield, Rivers's English estate:

What could induce you, with this sweet little retreat, to cross that vile ocean to Canada? I am astonished at the madness of mankind, who ... range the world from motives of avarice and ambition, when the rural cot, the fanning gale, the clear stream, and flowery bank, offer such delicious enjoyment at home.

You men are horrid, rapacious animals, with your spirit of

⁴¹ Arch, 481.

enterprize, and your nonsense: ever wanting more land than you can cultivate, and more money than you can spend.

That eternal pursuit of gain, that *rage of accumulation*, in which you are educated, corrupts your hearts, and robs you of half the pleasures of life. (347, emphasis added)

The “delicious enjoyment of home” contrasts with the wilds of Canada, and it is this particular difference that allows England to correct the gender politics that had become problematic to the sentimental empire in Canada. Rivers does not need to be a “rapacious animal” at Bellfield; there, he can profit simply from being “a little country gentleman” due to the rents produced by his small estate (109). What led him across the “vile ocean” was precisely the desire for more wealth, but his sister’s marriage and his mother’s relinquishment of the estate in exchange for his half-pay salary, frees up enough capital at home that he can abandon his “pursuit of gain.”⁴²

In England, an old and cultivated land, Rivers is able to establish his sentimental domestic Utopia. With an annual income of £400 or £500, he settles on land already cleared and productive; Bellfield comes with a ready-made house, ready-made furnishings that are “unfashionable” but “good,” and a ready-made view that is “enchanted” (299–300). Brooke repeatedly distinguishes the softer, cultivated beauties of England from the wild, sublime prospects of Canada and plots this difference into stadial history—“America is in infancy, Europe in old age” (24). Early in the novel, this contrast worked in Canada’s favour: “bold, picturesque, romantic, nature reigns here, ... adorned by a thousand wild graces which mock the cultivated beauties of Europe” (29). After the retreat, these “cultivated beauties” are precisely England’s strength, especially to Rivers: “with all my passion for the savage luxuriance of America, I begin to find my taste return for the more mild and regular charms of my native country” (300). England may have “no Chaudieres, no Montmorencies ... but we excel them in the lovely, the smiling; in enameled meadows, in waving corn-fields, in gardens the boast of Europe” (300). England’s cultivated state allows for the sentimental gendering of the “empire of hearts” denied in the

⁴² The original finances around his sister’s marriage invoke the collapse of the two empires, since marriage allows Rivers to “draw out the money I have in the funds, which I intended for my sister” and use them as capital to invest in Canada where the money will “turn to greater advantage” (178).

wilds of Canada. At the prospective Lake Champlain Utopia it was Emily and Arabella who were going to teach "the streams to flow" while their men cleared the land; but in England the land is already replete with "waving corn-fields," and Rivers can take on the feminine aesthetic role: "I have already projected a million of improvements," he says of his estate, "[I] have taught new streams to flow" (300).

The difference in gendered labour between Canada and England is the difference between a land where property is already owned and a land where property battles are still being fought. The inequality that challenges Brooke's vision of sentimental empire erupts when land ownership is in dispute. When Rivers fantasizes about cultivating land in Canada, the land is empty and without subjects; if he did "become lord of a principality," he jokes early on, his only subjects would be "bears and elks" (3). But this is not true; England has become lord of an "invaluable treasure" in its "large acquisition of people."⁴³ In one of his letters on political philosophy, Fermor attempts to legitimate private property through a labour theory of value where historical disparity is the natural product of individual industry. He hails Britain's government as "the master-piece of human wisdom" because of its "democratic freedom and equal distribution of property" (233). By the "equal distribution of property, [however], I would not be understood to mean such an equality as never existed, nor can exist but in idea; but that general, that comparative equality, which leaves to every man the absolute and safe possession of the fruits of his labors" (233). His labour theory of the origins of private property may work when those origins are a fantasy retrospection, but in the present of Canada, such "equality" would leave Canada to the Natives and Canadians. In other words, home in *Emily Montague* is where history has muted the traces of primitive accumulation and where waged labour allows for the efficient production of surplus value. This may help to explain why Brooke ends a novel about the failure of the empire of free trade with an outrageously unlikely plot twist bestowing

⁴³ At one point, Rivers entertains buying a seigneurship when he goes to look at an estate close to that of Mme des Roches. Rivers has previously justified his presence in Canada as adding value through clearing and cultivating lands, but he considers this estate precisely because it is already settled and thus cheaper than clearing the land himself (72). The savings he would accrue, in other words, originate in the "invaluable treasure" of past colonial labour.

“the wealth of a Nabob” on Rivers (5).⁴⁴ Why, if she rejects the “rage of accumulation” as I am arguing, does she reward her hero with such imperial spoils when Emily’s long-lost father returns from the East Indies a wealthy man?

The difference between the imperial riches of the East Indies and Canada is the difference between an old and a new country. Rivers earlier remarked that “we American travellers are under great disadvantages ... we have not the pomp of the orient to describe, but the simple and unadorned charms of nature” (375). Canada’s unadorned nature contrasts with the magnificent splendors of the Orient, a wealth already present and thus a country, as Said suggests, already feminized. Canada forces Brooke to confront the problem of labour, whereas East Indian wealth, accruing as it does through merchant trade without territorial acquisition (yet), allows Brooke an easy, if deeply problematic, out. Wealth so abounds in the East that Col. Willmott’s riches do not emerge from a masculine industrious greed but “by a train of lucky accidents” (389). The chiasmatic moral that Arabella pronounces near the end of the novel—“those who marry from love, *may* grow rich; but those who marry to be rich, will *never* love” (404)—contains the necessary chronology of Brooke’s dream of sentimental colonial trade. The empire of hearts can never reign when the rage of accumulation motivates trade, but if the social ideals of brotherhood lead the way, perhaps imperial exchange can be profitable.

At the same time, “nabob” wealth has been equated with avarice too many times throughout the novel for such closure not to undermine Brooke’s critique of free trade imperialism in Canada. In the final pages, Arabella refers to Willmott as Rivers’s “nabob cousin,” and “your oriental Colonel,” reminding us of the association (388, 393). In many ways, what the ending discloses is the interdependence of economic growth and colonial expansion in the late eighteenth century. For the lovers in a sentimental novel to grow rich, they must disavow accumulation

⁴⁴ The East Indian wealth comes in two stages: first, Rivers’s mother receives an unexpected annuity of £400 from a family friend recently returned from the East Indies who also wants to marry his daughter and £20,000 to Rivers; this friend turns out to be Emily’s father. The novel begins with Rivers remarking on his mother’s money: “She will make me happier by jovially enjoying the trifle I have assign’d to her use, than by procuring me the wealth of a Nabob, in which she was to have no share” (5). By the end, the nabob’s and his mother’s wealth are the same.

for accumulation's sake and accept love in Canada, but in order for their virtue to be rewarded the novel must turn to imperial riches from the other side of the world. That free trade can only produce wealth either through the exploitation of new natural resources or through mapping new geographies of labour may be obvious to the twenty-first-century critical reader, but, as I have demonstrated, it was not clear to a sentimentalist such as Brooke. At this generative moment of free trade imperialism, *Emily Montague* tries to represent increased wealth without imperial exploitation but is unsuccessful, first, when the lovers retreat to England and, second, when closure forces Brooke to turn to the *deus ex machina* of nabob wealth for virtue's reward.



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