

the agent of the Hudson's Bay Company, to his Excellency the Administrator of the Government, for his interposition, to render these persons amenable to justice.—Upon this application, his Excellency having been pleased to make his order of reference above-mentioned, requiring my opinion whether a warrant ought to be issued, for the obstruction of public justice complained of, I had the honour of making a report to his Excellency on this subject, of which I beg leave to annex a copy \*. In consequence of this report, a warrant was issued for the apprehension of M'Leod, and others of the principal ringleaders, in opposing the execution of the Magistrates warrant; but it was not executed, as they had, in the mean time, withdrawn themselves into the interior of the country, and could not be reached.—Various depositions were afterwards put into my hands by the clerks of the Crown, for the districts of Quebec and Three Rivers, charging the agents and servants of Mr. Lampson, with offences committed on the servants and property of the Hudson's Bay Company; and with these, there were also delivered to me depositions, charging the servants of the latter with offences against persons in the service of the former, in the district of Quebec. According to the practice which has always prevailed in Lower Canada, the Attorney General is charged with the duty of carrying on criminal prosecutions in the Courts of King's Bench, in the several districts of the Province; and upon the depositions put into his hands, before the opening of these Courts, he prepares the necessary indictments, which are in readiness to be preferred, as soon as the Court assembles. It became, therefore, incumbent on me, as a matter of course, to prepare, and lay before the Grand Jury, such indictments as were warranted by the depositions which had been delivered to me, as well against the servants of Mr. Lampson, as against those of the Hudson's Bay Company. This duty was discharged by me, with perfect impartiality between the parties concerned.—The criminal court for the district of Three Rivers being held before that for the district of Quebec, the depositions to be acted on in the former district first received attention. By these it was substantiated, that one Charles McCarthy, a clerk of Mr. Lampson, with a party of men under his orders, had assaulted one Antoine Hamel, a clerk, and three hired men, in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, while engaged in their trading pursuits, had made them prisoners, had taken them to several trading posts of Mr. Lampson, in the interior of the country, and, after compelling them, as prisoners, to go from place to place as suited the convenience of their captors, had at last set them at liberty, in a remote part of the province, several hundred miles from the place where they had been captured. For this offence an indictment was laid by me before the Grand Jury for the district of Three Rivers, and was returned a true bill against all the persons named in it †. One of them only, a hired man of the name of Moïse Villeneuve, was in custody, and he pleaded guilty to the indictment ‡; against the others, who had not yet returned from the Indian country, into the civilised parts of the Province, process was ordered to issue. At Quebec, as soon as the Court of King's Bench opened there, in September last, I laid before the Grand Jury, as it was my duty to do, indictments as well against the servants of the Hudson's Bay Company § as against those of Mr. Lampson ||, upon all the charges contained in the depositions which had been put into my hands. The indictments thus preferred, at the instance of Mr. Lampson's servants, were all ignored by the Grand Jury ¶. Of the indictments preferred at the instance of servants of the Hudson's Bay Company, two were ignored, and three were returned true bills \*\*. One of the former was a bill for the robbery above mentioned, complained of by Mr. Cowie. The Grand Jury, in ignoring this bill for the felony charged in it, requested me to lay before them a bill for a misdemeanor, on the same facts; and I, therefore, laid before them a bill charging M'Leod and eight other individuals, servants of Mr. Lampson, with “a riot, assaulting and beating Robert Cowie and “others, and forcibly taking from and out of the lawful custody of the said Robert Cowie divers “goods and chattels, and converting the same to their own use.” This indictment was returned by the Grand Jury a true bill ††; and they also found a bill against the same M'Leod and four other individuals, servants of Mr. Lampson, for a riot and forcibly opposing and preventing the execution of the warrant of Mr. Christie, the Police Magistrate, above mentioned ‡‡. It would have been highly desirable, in order to check effectually the disorders that gave occasion to these indictments, that the trials of them should have taken place, without delay. But the Defendants insisted on their right to traverse; and, in consideration of the alleged difficulty to be experienced in travelling from the King's Posts to Quebec, in the succeeding term of March, they applied for and obtained a postponement of their trials till September following—that is, for

\* Vide Append. No. 9,

† Vide Append. No. 10,

§ Vide Append. No. 12,

\*\* Vide Append. No. 11,

†† Vide Append. No. 11,

† Vide Append. No. 10,

|| Vide Append. No. 11,

¶ Vide Append. No. 12,

†† Vide Append. No. 11,