

Inclosure 18 in No. 28.

Sir W. Colebrooke to Mr. Fox.

Sir,

Frederickton, June 19, 1841.

I HAVE the honour to inclose to your Excellency copy of two despatches I have addressed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, on the subject of the defence of the frontier and the settlement of the Boundary Question.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) W. M. G. COLEBROOKE.

Inclosure 19 in No. 28.

Sir W. Colebrooke to Lord John Russell.

My Lord,

Frederickton, New Brunswick, June 14, 1841.

REFERRING to my despatch dated 9th June, I have the honour to report to your Lordship, that on the 10th instant, I proceeded to Woodstock with the object of inspecting the site of the barracks proposed to be erected at that place, and of forming an opinion of the necessity of proceeding with the work.

The township of Woodstock, which is situated on the St. John's River, is the most prominent settlement in that quarter, and the elevated ground selected for the barrack is extremely well chosen for the defence of the position.

After inspecting the ground I proceeded to the frontier line opposite to the American settlement of Houlton.

This settlement, which is increasing rapidly, is distant about ten miles from Woodstock, and a military post has been formed which is occupied by a body of the troops of the United States.

The post is retired about two miles from the frontier, and is overlooked from an eminence within the British territory called Parkes' Hill.

Roads having been opened from Woodstock in various directions, and extending to the frontier, several thriving settlements have been formed; and as a doubt exists whether these settlements may not, in some cases, be found to be beyond the line as recently retraced by the American surveyors, much anxiety prevails; and I regretted to understand, that the feelings of the people on both sides of the border had been, of late, considerably excited.

The British settlers, being aware of the influence which those of the State of Maine are able to exert upon their Government, are not disposed to rely upon the pacific disposition of those in authority; and I confess that I am apprehensive that no adequate security at present exists for the maintenance of tranquillity. I am, therefore, of opinion, that as a measure of precaution as well as of defence, the establishment of a body of regular troops at Woodstock is desirable; by giving confidence and a sense of security to the settlers, it will tend to allay the excitement which at present prevails, and to prevent those movements on the part of the people of Maine, which might disturb the peace of the frontier:

It is not now a question whether the valuable lands within the line should be reclaimed and settled, or left in a wilderness state with a view to defence. The country is now in progress of settlement on both sides of the line, and it appears to me to be of the utmost importance, that while the American population is rapidly augmenting, the settlement of the British territory should not be retarded.

The Assembly having passed a resolution in the last session to enable the Government to purchase the land required for the intended barracks, the tenders have been recently approved in Council; and I beg leave to recommend to your Lordship that the work should be proceeded with, as soon as it may be practicable.

From the various information I have recently received, I am strongly impressed with a conviction that the only practicable means of effecting a