

the Company obtained a lease for 21 years (renewed for a like period in 1842), of an additional territory, did they or did they not bind themselves "to make due provision for the civilization and moral and religious improvement of the natives?" Now there is no evidence to be found of more having been done by the Company or its Directors during 36 years to redeem the above-stated pledge—there is evidence to the contrary, and notwithstanding the honeysuckle phrases of Mr. Labouchere, there are persons who are beginning to doubt the high character of a Director, who, as such, sanctions breaches of duty and obligation, which, if committed in private life, would earn nothing but reprobation and contempt.

It appears to be an old habit of this body to slip the yoke of obligation. The Charter of 1670 they loudly declare is valid and legal: in that case its obligations are binding on them. Now, the principal condition on which the Charter was originally granted bound them to make exertions for the discovery of the North-West Passage. And Mr. Gladstone plainly declared, "All those expeditions which have been made by the adventurous navigators of England during the nineteenth century, at an enormous cost to the country, ought by right to have been paid out of the revenues of the Hudson's Bay Company."

But the real questions are incomparably more weighty than the character and sagacity of any knot of money makers. The character really involved, is the character of the people of England for justice and humanity; the sagacity required, is that of the imperial policy, which shall administer these vast regions for the best advantage of ourselves, *i. e.* of the nation at large, and of mankind in general. Is the whole upper section of the American Continent, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, to be left in the hands of these men, locked up from access to the energy and capital of English colonists, in order that fur animals may increase and multiply, and until the Americans, who are now crowding into the adjoining territory of Minnesota, may by and by swarm over the boundary line, and without impediment occupy, and annex, the vacant domain at their pleasure?