

No settler is allowed to sell English goods in any of these districts, over which the Company exercises *sole* jurisdiction. He has no voice whatever in the Government, nor is he allowed to navigate any of the lakes or rivers without special license. None but the representatives of the "firm" are permitted to trade in furs and other such commodities. The Company's officers, attended by an armed police, have frequently entered the houses of settlers in search of "contraband goods." Woe be to the friendless settler, should any be found! All his "goods and chattels" would be seized and confiscated; his hut would probably be burned, and himself imprisoned, whilst his wife and children, if unable to hunt and fish, might starve and die.

The chief-factors, and members of the Company's council are absolute masters of the lives and properties, "goods and chattels" of all settlers. The legislative, judicial, and executive functions of Government are united in the Governor and Council—they make and un-make, administer and execute their own laws, and are not accountable for their actions to either the Sovereign or Parliament.

Hudson Bay, like the Hudson River, received its name from its celebrated discoverer, Henry Hudson. This noble navigator, sailing in the service of the Russia Trading Company, passed through Hudson Strait, doubled Cape Wolstenholme, and entered the "Mediterranean of the North" in 1610; and for some time flattered himself that the object of his search was found—that the north-west passage to India was discovered. After visiting many portions of the coast, he resolved to explore the seas north of Southampton Island; but his crew mutinied, and left himself and his gallant son to perish on the desolate shores of that land which his bravery and perseverance had revealed to the world. The same Company sent out other expeditions, commissioned to explore more fully the regions discovered by Hudson, to establish commercial communications with the natives, and, if possible, to discover the

North-West passage to India. They received a charter in 1669 from Charles II., granting them a monopoly of trade to and with the various territories watered by rivers flowing into the Bay, and empowering them, if necessary, to build, equip, and commission vessels of war, and enlist soldiers to protect their rights. The Russia Trading Company now became the "Hudson Bay Company." Their worthy Sovereign, unconscious perhaps of the extent of the power and privileges conferred, constituted them, according to the words of their charter, "The true and absolute lords and proprietors of said territories for ever, on condition that they pay to the monarch of England, or his (or her) heirs, two elks, and two black beavers, as often as he (or she) may visit, or happen to enter, the said countries, territories, and regions." As yet none of the Sovereigns of England or their heirs have "visited or entered the said regions," and, therefore, the Company have never paid anything for the immense power and valuable privileges they enjoy, excepting the original presents to the "merry monarch." At a later period, this Company added considerably to their wealth and power by amalgamating with the "North-West Company" of Montreal. On the strength of this charter, granted to them two hundred years ago, by a careless, "free and easy" monarch, they still assert their rights in fee simple to the lands of a territory nearly as large as Europe; and, not content with enjoying a monopoly of its trade, they have the assurance to claim absolute power over all within it, treating the industrious emigrant or settler as an intruder and an enemy!

A century or two ago this institution may have been very useful and desirable; but its existence at the present day is inconsistent with the advance of civilization, inimical to the welfare of our country, a reproach to the excellent laws and constitution of our Dominion, and a disgrace to the whole British empire. Confident that we speak the sentiments of the majority of Canadians and other free men on this con-