

## PAPERS RELATING TO THE

For your Lordship's satisfaction, I take the liberty of inclosing a concise statement of the circumstances under which the settlement on Red River has been formed, and the views of the Hudson's Bay company in its establishment.

I have the honour to be, &c.

The Right Honourable,  
the Earl Bathurst, &c. &c. &c.

(Signed) *Joseph Berens.*

Inclosure  
(2)  
in Earl Bathurst's  
of 18 March 1815.

Gentlemen,

Penge Place, 14th February 1815.

You are well aware, that several persons connected with the North-West company, who consider the settlement in Red River as likely to be injurious to their interests, have frequently enlarged on the danger of hostility from the natives, which that company might have the means of exciting. These menaces we have hitherto disregarded, as a mere artifice to check the progress of the settlement. Of late, however, my correspondent at Montreal has strongly expressed an opinion, that serious danger is to be apprehended; and it would appear, that in proportion to the success of the establishment in getting over the natural difficulties of an infant colony, the virulence of its enemies has increased, and that some desperate effort is in contemplation to overturn it (while that is yet practicable,) by means of those Indians who are under the influence of the Canadians.

A letter has lately been put into my hands, which corroborates these ideas very strongly, as it shows that the same apprehension is entertained by persons in Canada, who must unquestionably have access to correct information. The letter is dated in October last, and relates chiefly to sale of lands, which the writer seems to have intended, with the view of settling with some of his relations on Red River. He is a partner of the North-West company, and a gentleman of known probity and veracity. He retired from the active management of the business in the inland country, at a recent date, so that he must be well acquainted with the feelings of his partners there; and as he still draws a share of their profits, it is not likely that he would be disposed to misrepresent their views, or to exaggerate their malevolence. I inclose the letter for your consideration, and I request your attention particularly to the following paragraph, in which you will observe that he speaks of the enmity of the partners, in general, and the interest they have to destroy the settlement, as a matter so well understood, as to require no comment:—"From reports which have reached me, from a source I cannot doubt, since I had the pleasure of seeing you, I have reason to fear that my brother's life, and the safety of the infant colony on Red River, are in a perilous situation. My greatest fear is from treachery, and machinations to prejudice the natives against the colonists. Some of the wintering partners of the North-West company, think favourably of the undertaking, and will go all lengths consistent with their duty and interest as North-West partners, to prevent its destruction. The strongest argument I have heard used to raise a jealousy in the natives, is by inculcating in their minds a belief, that they are robbed of their lands without any indemnification. This I have heard a year ago, from the mouth of a principal, and one of the chief instigators of this enmity to the colony."

If the Indians have been led to entertain jealousy on this head, it has not been from any inattention of our agent to satisfy their just claims. Captain M'Donnell had my instructions to make a purchase from the natives, of the land required for the use of the settlement. In his letter of July 1813 (less than a year after his arrival on Red River,) he writes to this effect:—"I am at a loss in what manner to make a purchase from the natives; those here do not call themselves owners of the soil, although long in possession. It belonged originally to the Crees, whom the Assiniboins, who are a branch of the Sioux, drove off. A small annual present will satisfy the Indians here, and should the others make a claim, a present will satisfy them also."

In the same letter captain M'Donnell mentions circumstances which convinced him that, even at that period, the North-West company had been endeavouring to give the Indians a bad impression of the colonists; and, among other authorities, he refers to a letter from Mr. John M'Leod, who had received information from a Canadian of the intrigues that were going on to influence the minds of the Indians; and by him it was distinctly stated, that clerks and interpreters of the North-West company had told the Indians, "should they allow a colony to settle here, they would be made  
"slaves