

# LETTERS.

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No. 1.—*To the Editor of the Hamilton Spectator.*

ST. THOMAS, 8th July, 1857.

In my letter to the *British Colonist*, which you published with so much alacrity, when I said, "I have thrown these remarks hastily together," I did not mean to convey that my opinions were hastily formed; but this is what the *Leader* insinuates. I wrote because I thought, and do think, that Mr. Chief Justice Draper took a sensible and very proper view of the interests of Canada in his evidence on the Hudson's Bay Territory question; and because I considered that the leading Toronto journals were taking a directly opposite course—a course which if hastily followed by the Canadian Government will involve Canada in a large, if not profitless, expenditure of the public money.

The *Leader* does not seem willing to admit that the Hudson's Bay Company "are the custodians of the whole of that vast territory for the British Empire." Now, I consider that the point for which he contends is embraced in the sentence which he quotes from my letter. All the rights of Great Britain and Canada to that vast territory are now exercised under the control of the Hudson's Bay Company, and it is not contended that Great Britain may not resume those rights whenever she thinks proper. In proof of this we need only remark, that the British Government has sent troops into the very heart of that vast territory to protect her subjects in the enjoyment of their rights, and to prevent the encroachment of our neighbors of the United States, which the *Leader* desires to guard against. Is Canada more able to maintain "the whole of the British possessions north of the parallel of forty-nine degrees" than Great Britain? or will it be contended that the Imperial Government has sent troops to the Red River merely to protect the rights of the Hudson's Bay Company? Certainly not.

A great deal of unmerited abuse has been poured out against the Hudson's Bay Company. They have been held up to the gaze of the Canadian public in the same catalogue with the Southern Railway swindlers, Gen. Walker and his band of filibusters, squatters, and every class of land pirates, and that, too, by the leading organs of the Toronto press. And for what? Because they had acquired rights and privileges, some two hundred years ago, and have not been willing to give them up to those who have less claim to them. It is time that the Canadian public should ask themselves, when they have succeeded in dispossessing the Hudson's Bay Company of the territories they now occupy, shall we be in a better position to hold them? Are we prepared to extend and maintain an efficient Government over the millions of acres of arable land of which the *Leader* speaks? Are the revenues of Canada to be lavished in endeavoring to accomplish what the Imperial Government with the co-operation of the Hudson's Bay Company are more effectually doing? To attempt it would be to imitate the frog in the fable. The Imperial Government is doing for us at a cheaper rate, much more than we can do for ourselves.

But there is another question I would ask the Toronto leaders of the press. Do they deign to consider, while they vituperate the Hudson's Bay Company, that they have rights which must be recognized as well as our own? Why a mere squatter, such as gentlemen of the Toronto press designate the Hudson's Bay Company, if he be allowed to occupy another man's land for a number of years, with consent of the owner, and to improve it solely for his own benefit, would in equity be allowed a reasonable time to quit, and be paid for his improvements—or would another man with no better claim than the first one had, be allowed to turn the occupant out and