

Under what we believe to be a fictitious charter, but which the Company's agents have maintained to be the fundamental law of "Rupert's Land," we have been prevented the receiving in exchange the peltries of our country for any of the products of our labour, and have been forbidden giving peltries in exchange for any of the imported necessaries of life, under the penalty of being imprisoned, and of having our property confiscated; we have been forbidden to take peltries in exchange even for food supplied to famishing Indians.

The Hudson's Bay Company's clerks, with an armed police, have entered into settlers' houses in quest of furs, and confiscated all they found. One poor settler, after having his goods seized, had his house burnt to the ground, and afterwards was conveyed prisoner to York Factory.

The Company's first legal adviser in this colony has declared our navigating the lakes and rivers between this colony and Hudson's Bay with any articles of our produce to be illegal. The same authority has declared our selling of English goods, in this colony, to be illegal.

On our annual commercial journeys into Minnesota, we have been pursued like felons, by armed constables, who searched our property, even by breaking open our trunks; all furs found were confiscated.

This interference with those of aboriginal descent had been carried to such extent, as to endanger the peace of the settlement.

Thus we, the inhabitants of this land, have been and are constrained to behold the valuable commercial productions of our country exported for the exclusive profit of a company of traders, who are strangers to ourselves and to our country.

We are by necessity compelled to use many articles of their importation, for which we pay from one hundred to four hundred per cent. on prime cost, while we are prohibited exporting those productions of our own country and industry, which we could exchange for the necessaries of life.

This country is governed and legislated for by two distinct Legislative Councils, in constituting of which we have no voice; the members of the highest holding their office of Councillors by virtue of rank in the Company's service. This body passes laws affecting our interest; as for instance in 1845 it decreed that twenty per cent. duty would be levied on the imports of all who were suspected of trading in furs, this duty to be paid at York Factory. Again in 1854 the same body passed a resolution imposing 12½ per cent. on all the goods landed for the colony at York Factory.

The local legislature consists of the Governor, who is also Judge, and who holds his appointments from the Company. They are appointed by the same body, and are, with one or two exceptions, to a greater or less extent, dependant on that body. This Council impose taxes, creates offences, and punishes the same by fines and imprisonments, (*i.e.*) The Governor and Council make the laws, judge the laws, and execute their own sentence. We have no voice in their selection, neither have we any constitutional means of controlling their action.

Our lands are fertile and easily cultivated, but the exclusive system of Hudson's Bay Company effectually prohibits the tiller of the soil, as well as the adventurer in any other industrial pursuit, from devoting his energies to those labours which, while producing