

from distances ranging between twenty and seventy miles. The mill is twenty-four horse power. and will saw nine thousand feet of lumber per day. The mill has proved very convenient to Sun River, Forts Shaw and Benton, as lumber for building purposes was formerly brought from Helena, the freight adding greatly to the cost. Since the beginning of the present season Benton alone has purchased fifty thousand feet of boards, scantling, and shingles, and if a new military post should be erected—orders to that effect are daily expected—Messrs Largent & Adams will have all they can do to supply the demand for building material.

In this part of Montana, the smallest enterprise requiring a cash capital for its establishment and management is attended with difficulties unknown in more populous communities. Few Eastern towns or villages having the advantages of railroad communication, proximity to forests, and cheap labor would consider the erection of a saw mill as a matter of great importance or worthy of special commendation, because such enterprises are common and attended with little labor and comparatively small expense. It is not so with us. Money commands high rates of interest, skilled labor cannot always be obtained even for wages exceeding the incomes of some of the small business firms of the East, suitable timber is not easily procured, and there are so many profitable pursuits which require little or no capital to conduct them, that few of our people care to invest their means in local improvements. Messrs Largent & Co.'s saw mill is therefore an institution of considerable importance to this section, and the proprietors are hardly less worthy of credit for their enterprise than many of our Eastern business firms who have millions invested in costly works.

Messrs Healy & Bro.'s grist mill is another enterprise well worthy of mention as one of the most important improvements yet made at Sun River. The mill cost its owners the round sum of \$12,000, and is said to equal if not surpass anything of the kind in the Territory. It is run by water, is thirty-seven horse power, and has two sets of burrs. The farmers of the valley have not been able, as yet, to keep the mill running more than a few weeks during the year, but it is thought that next season's produce will give it employment for several months. The flour produced by this mill, called the "Anchor Mills" brand, is certainly unsurpassed in Montana, and is probably not inferior to the finest States brands.

Some time in the future, when we have our railroads, our irrigating canals, our steam mills and manufacturing of every description, and all other improvements that naturally follow in the path of advancing civilization, the building of water-power mills and wooden bridges will no doubt appear to us as very insignificant affairs; but however humble they may then seem, they are great enterprises now, and their originators deserve the thanks of a grateful public. The example of Sun River is worthy of imitation and we sincerely hope that Benton will soon profit by it. We have every facility for building mills and making almost any other improvements, and certainly we have as much need of them as our neighbor. Benton is the oldest and the least improved

town of the Territory; the same enterprise that has done so much for Sun River would have made Benton the metropolis of Montana.

CORRESPONDENCE.

EDITOR RECORD:—

As many of the readers of the RECORD are familiar with the route to and country bordering our northwestern frontier, a description brief though it may be, of the route to the centre of the fur trade in that region would be tiresome to them, as it may perhaps prove uninteresting to the numbers whose attention has of late been invited to that quarter, through the newspaper reports concerning the actions of the British Mounted Police. At the time of these reports, a great many were impressed with the idea that they could perceive the action of an under current in the drifting of these huge breaches of law and custom, infringement of the vaunted privileges of Magna Charta.—Others would not believe that the administrators of British-Canadian justice were acting too harshly in their measures for the suppression of illicit traffic, or that they were taking any steps in advance of the statute under which they are authorized to act. Others, still, would intimate that in all their actions the Mounted Police have merely conformed to the designs and intentions of the Provincial authorities.

With such wide differences of opinion existing, it has been almost impossible to arrive at a just conclusion. After a thorough search through all the facts that could have led to such assumptions, we may safely advance a conclusion that may be considered both proper and just, to wit: That a power behind the throne does exist; that this power has pressed the Canadian Government into action, and through the movements of the police force established the fact of their present existence; that this force is not governed by the rules or ordinances of the Northwest Territories, save and except such portions of the same that clothe with arbitrary powers unequalled in the decade of England's colonial Might-Rule. This may appear to be a bold assertion, it is nevertheless undeniable. We might even add the words of one who is much respected and esteemed—not alone by the white citizens of the Northwest, but by the Mounted Police themselves—and revered by the Indians: "The country is at present under martial law as severe and stringent in its application, on account of the extensive latitude given to those in command, as ever it has been in the darkest of the penal days in the Old World."

In 1873 an act was passed by the Canadian Parliament, and approved by Her "Most Excellent" Majesty, respecting the administration of justice and for the establishment of a police force in the North West Territories. An amendatory act was passed in 1874, having the same title and containing similar enactments, the amendments being confined to the organization, duties, and powers of the force. It is a well known fact that a certain corporation brought all its available influence to bear on the Canadian Parliament to aid in the passage of this act, regardless of an immense expense. We must consequently infer that through the successful

wire pulling of this company, and under the provisions of the act 37 Victoria (1874), and supplemental proclamation, the North West British Mounted Police were mustered into service. After a weary march the command arrived at its present station in October, 1874, where, notwithstanding the inclement season, they struggled to construct a log shelter, which, after receiving a due share of chinking and daubing, was dubbed "Fort McLeod," in honor of the present commandant, J. F. McLeod, Asst. Commissioner of Police. The present force at the post numbers about one hundred and forty men, beside the requisite complement of officers. A detachment of ten men commanded by an inspector are stationed at the trading post of T. C. Power & Bro., distant about fifteen miles. The officers and men will compare favorably with a like number in the same standing, no matter of what nation. The officers are communicative, hospitable, and to all appearance, gentlemen. The enlisted men have nearly all seen service; some in the English army, through the Crimean and other wars, and others during the days of our own late unpleasantness. But our attention is not directed to the police force in their social characters or in regard to their intellectual standing or military prowess, but rather in relation to their position as executors of the commands of their Sovereign, "by and with the advice and consent of the Senate and House of Commons of Canada;" the same being controlled in the interest and by the agents of the Hudson Bay Fur Company, in their attempt to monopolize the trade of the Northwest.

It is asserted that American traders can not compete with the Hudson Bay Company. The steps that have been taken to drive away the American traders would seem to contradict this assertion. But if the same rule were applied generally, and without regard to position or influence, with one exception all the American and Canadian traders would appear in the same light and stand on the same level. As it seems, however, that the application of any rule with a due regard for justice was not entertained, our conviction that we have concluded aright is strengthened. Every possible advantage has been considered and absorbed, every seeming point of advancement has been counted in this attempted monopoly. To better understand how far this company have gone in their endeavor, our readers should have perused a pamphlet, written at the instance and according to the desires and wishes of this Fur Company, by a Methodist Missionary. In this pamphlet every American in the Northwest is set down as a murderer, cut throat and whisky trader, and the country represented as being in the most alarming condition. No doubt the country was not in a condition to justify favorable comment. Many of the Americans were following the example of Canadians and Half Breeds, by trading whisky, and in their own words "would take the advantage of an Indian lest he might get the drop on them for some fancied insult." But it did not come with in a respectable degree of being honestly illustrated or described by the reverend writer.

This pamphlet had a wide circulation in Canada, and was the means of kindling a feeling of prejudice in the minds of Canadians towards

the Americans who, as they believed, were trifling with and preventing the trade in the Northwest. More especially did it receive attentive readers when it became known that the author was a minister of the gospel. But truth will out. Even the dense reverential atmosphere which surrounded this worthy representative of the divine profession could not conceal the true character within. This saintly missionary was himself the most notorious whisky trader in the Territories. It seemed almost impossible that such could be the case, that any person could be so depraved as to mock the sanctity of the ministry of any church, degrade his position for a pecuniary benefit, to a standing far below that of a broker of a bogus dollar store. But as the information is derived from a reliable source, your correspondent is forced to acknowledge that a more skillful or adept whisky trader than this sanctimonious spy and informer never set foot in British or any other territory.

One instance may better enable you to understand the character of this man. There are two brothers of the family in the Northwest. One conducts a trading store while the other (the preacher) acts as whipper in, capper for the concern. On one occasion a party of Indians attended their place of business for the purpose of receiving religious instruction. We cull the following precious extract from the reverend gentleman's eloquent harangue: "My brothers, whenever you get tired of listening to me, just pass into the trading room, where my brother will attend to your wants. * * * If you do not trade here today, you will have bad medicine. Just step in, and when you have had enough (meaning whisky), come again to me and hear the words of the Great Spirit." He then whispered to the brother: "Let it run ten cups for a head and tail robe."

This is the man who undertook to explain the effect of whisky trading and American intercourse on the trade of the Hudson Bay Company, and on the future welfare of the Indian. Certainly no one better acquainted with the subject could be found willing to perform the task of misrepresenting the situation, or, more properly, representing it in the colors suitable to those who tendered the employment. The design was evident. It gave the Canadians some ground to work on as well as to create a bad impression on the minds of those who were to become members of the force then about to be organized. The reading of the statute shows this clearly, and the actions of the Police prove that the intention in establishing the force was in accordance with the interests of the Hudson Bay Company.

Presuming that the interest of the readers of the RECORD is always alive to anything that may interfere or in any way touch on the fur trade, and fearing to crowd your valuable space, further remarks will be presented in next issue, by

JACK BLUNT.

DISSOLUTION.

The partnership heretofore existing between the undersigned, known by the name of J. F. Porter & Co., is hereby dissolved by mutual consent, to date from April 1, 1875. All outstanding business will be settled by either of the undersigned.

J. F. PORTER.
C. A. BULL.