

desire it. Generally, however, when their time expires they find themselves in debt, and are obliged to serve an extra time to pay it: and not unfrequently, at the expiration of their engagement, they have become attached, or married, to some Indian woman or half-breed, and have children, on which account they find themselves unable to leave, and continue attached to the Company's service, and in all respects under the same engagement as before. If they desire to remain and cultivate land, they are assigned a certain portion, but are still dependent on the Company for many of the necessaries of life, clothing, &c. This causes them to become a sort of vassal, and compels them to execute the will of the Company. In this way, however, order and decorum are preserved, together with steady habits, for few can in any way long withstand this silent influence. The consequence is, that few communities are to be found more well-behaved and orderly than that which is formed of the persons who have retired from the Company's service. That this power, exercised by the officers of the Company, is much complained of, I am aware, but I am satisfied that as far as the morals of the settlers and servants are concerned, it is used for good purposes. For instance, the use of spirits is almost entirely done away with. Dr. M'Laughlin has acted in a highly praiseworthy manner in this particular. Large quantities of spirituous liquors are now stored in the magazines at Vancouver, which the Company have refused to make an article of trade, and none is now used by them in the territory for that purpose. They have found this rule highly beneficial to their business in several respects: more furs are taken, in consequence of those who are engaged having fewer inducements to err; the Indians are found to be less quarrelsome, and pursue the chase more constantly; and the settlers, as far as I could hear, have been uniformly prosperous.

In order to show the course of the Company upon this subject, I will mention one circumstance. The brig Thomas H. Perkins arrived here with a large quantity of rum on board, with other goods. Dr. M'Laughlin, on hearing of this, made overtures immediately for the purchase of the whole cargo, in order to get possession of the whiskey or rum, and succeeded. The Doctor mentioned to me that the liquor was now in store, and would not be sold in the country, and added, that the only object he had in buying the cargo was to prevent the use of the rum, and to sustain the temperance cause.

The settlers are also deterred from crimes, as the Company have the power of sending them to Canada for trial, which is done with little cost, by means of the annual expresses which carry their accounts and books.