

in boats, and the ice in the small Lakes is not sufficiently strong to allow of its being sent on sledges: however, extraordinary efforts must be made to get it sent forward. I had previous to its arrival purchased some from the Traders: but we shall not have too much. I now wish to give you some idea of the state of Fort McKay. As I expected, I was obliged before I left it, to use rather extraordinary means to obtain a supply of wheat. I ascertained the quantity in possession of the Farmers and ordered that every one should furnish a fourth of the quantity which they were possessed of. I left Mr. Pulman orders on the subject before I came to this place, and I expect that by that means I shall obtain about 200 bushels of wheat which with a little grease will satisfy the Indians. Besides this supply I expect I shall be able to collect 100 bushels of corn. Previous to my leaving the Fort I purchased lead to make balls for the Indians. Mr. Keating had begun the magazine, and provision store, and I gave orders to have the boats repaired and equipped for service. It is my intention to send Mr. Dickson and the Indians up the Mississippi until they are wanted to a place where there is an abundance of fish and wild fowl by which means I shall save provisions. I stated in one of my last letters from Fort McKay my intention of sending away the Michigans, but I have changed my determination and shall retain them, with the exception of some suspected persons whom I shall send away early in the Spring. Every thing will be hazarded on the conduct of this Detachment, but all that I can do to counteract any evil designs which they may entertain shall be done. I propose taking with me into the Fort a select band of Saulks, which will operate as a check upon the Michigans, should they be disposed to do any mischief. I am fully aware of your inability at present to furnish me with any aid, but I hope and trust that when circumstances put it in your power, you will send me some assistance. It now only remains for me to assure you that the Country which you have been pleased to entrust to my care, shall not be lost for want of exer-