

10. In August, 1912, on account of constitutional difficulties encountered the Nishga tribe resolved independently and directly to submit to His Majesty's Privy Council a petition asking for a determination of their rights and the protection of His Majesty.

11. The Deputy Minister of Justice has advised that the rights of these Indians depend mainly upon deciding whether the Royal Proclamation of 1763 extends to the territory now known as British Columbia.

12. In our judgment it is not possible to secure a determination of the rights of the Indians by the method proposed in 1911, and by reason of failure to secure the consent of British Columbia it is not possible to obtain a satisfactory determination by means of referring questions to the Supreme Court of Canada.

13. Their Lordships of the Judicial Committee have in the Quebec case opened the way for submitting the aboriginal claims of the Indians of Canada.

14. The attitude of denial and refusal repeatedly assumed by the present Government of British Columbia is constantly agitating the minds of the Indians and increasing among them dissatisfaction and unrest.

Rev. Dr. Tucker then addressed the Minister as follows:—

I wish to say a few words to-day, not by way of giving information, as I have done on previous occasions, but as an earnest plea on behalf of speedy action, looking to the final and satisfactory settlement of this difficult question.

My first plea is drawn from the Indians themselves. For forty long years they have pleaded, and prayed, and waited for a settlement of their claims. And they have waited through all those trying years without committing any act of violence, though they have often been under severe provocation. And they have persisted in this peaceful course mainly because of their sublime, their invincible faith and trust in the British and Canadian Governments. It is pathetic, at times, to see them show a child-like confidence in British justice. And they are gradually being overwhelmed by the inrush of settlers through the policy of the Provincial Government. Action should be taken to do them justice before it is too late, before they are brought to see that they have pleaded, and prayed, and waited in vain.

My second plea is drawn from the Canadian Government itself. They are the guardians of the Indians and in the last resort any responsibility arising from the care of the Indians must be brought home to them. Forty years ago the Government took a strong stand on behalf of the Indians. The late